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JANUARY 2016

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A detailed close-up of a watch's internal mechanical movement, showing various gears, jewels, and the intricate design of the escapement. The background is a blurred image of a watch face with Roman numerals and a blue hand.

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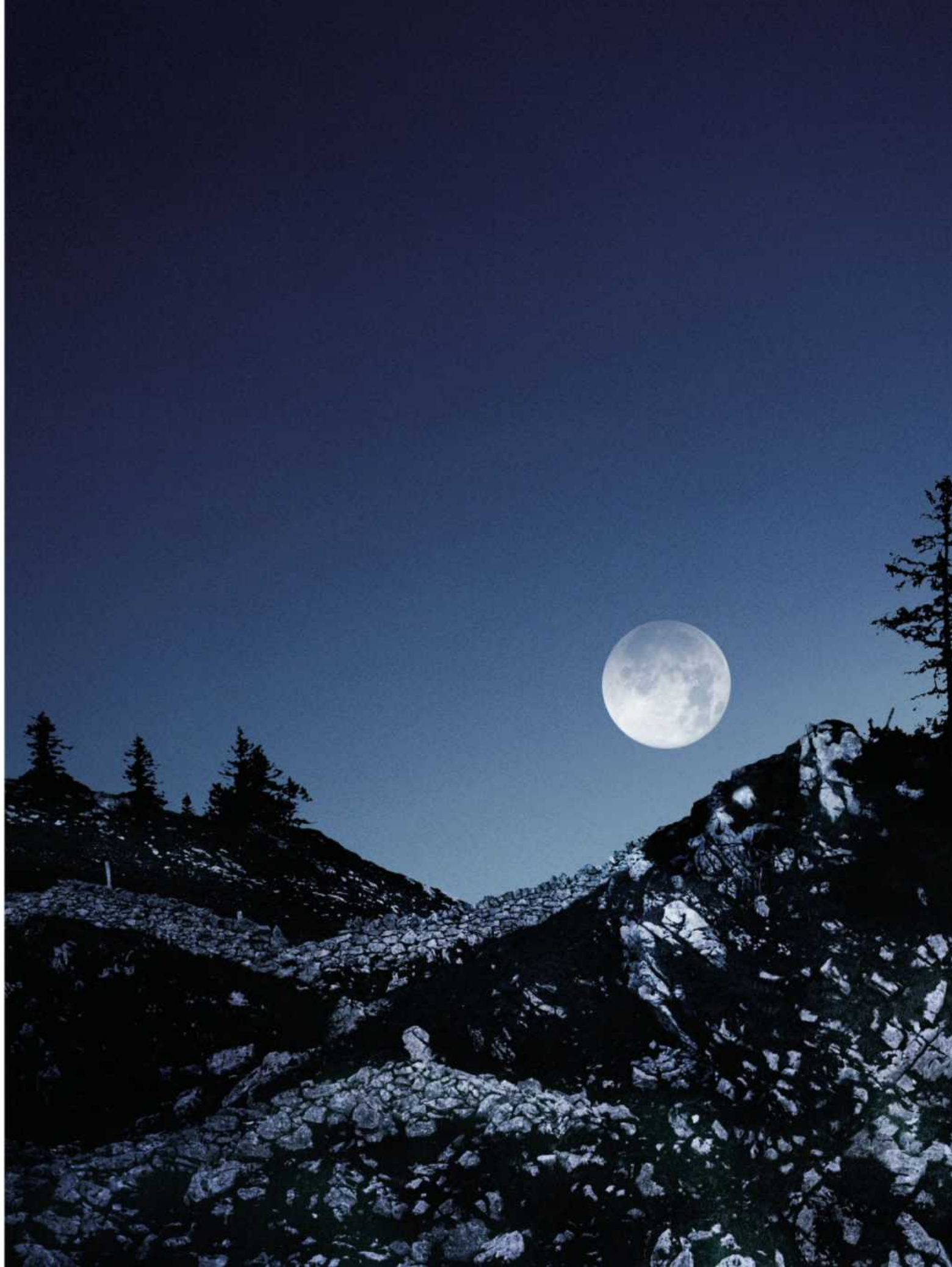


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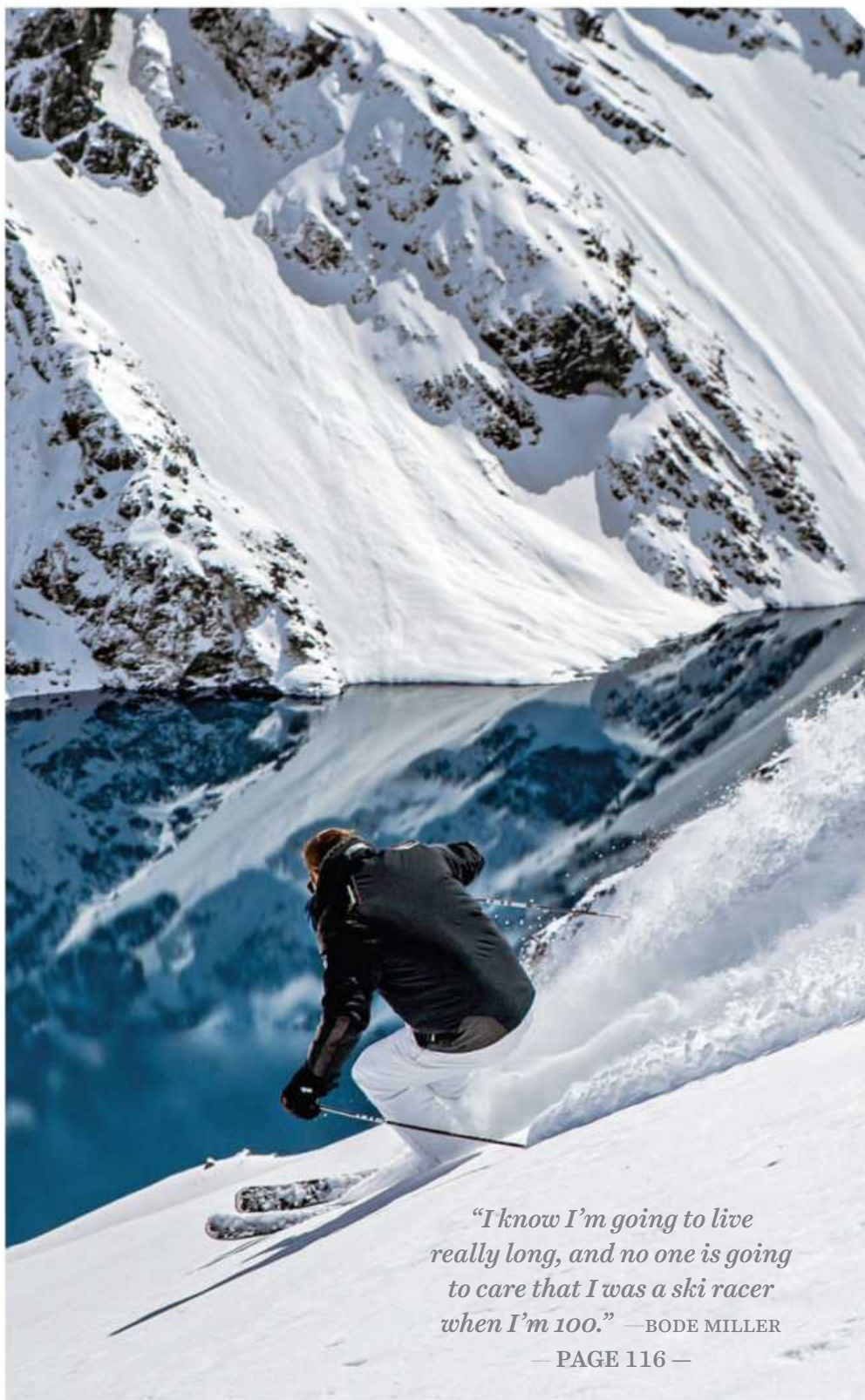
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"I know I'm going to live really long, and no one is going to care that I was a ski racer when I'm 100." —BODE MILLER

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THE TRAVEL ISSUE

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Believing in Bali

The beauty of Balinese culture rises to the surface at a spate of exciting new resorts on the Island of Gods. STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACKIE CARADONIO

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For *Robb Report's* fourth annual Culinary Masters Competition, six elite chefs—from Christopher Kostow to Curtis Duffy—handpicked the United States' most exciting up-and-comers to face off in a clash of regional cuisines. After an unforgettable series of dinners, our judges have named a winner.

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January Digital Bonus Feature

Top 10 Cars for Long-Distance Drives

Wherever the road trip takes you, these automobiles will get you there quickly, comfortably, and stylishly. BY ROBERT ROSS

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Gone, Bourbon, Gone

As Pappy Van Winkle announces its 2016 allocation, we revisit the tale of the brand's infamous bourbon heist.

RobbReport.com/PappyHeist



Feature Comforts

RobbReport.com shines a spotlight on the top places to stay during the 32nd annual Sundance Film Festival in Park City.

RobbReport.com/SundanceResorts



And They're Off!

Following a multimillion-dollar renovation, the famed Santa Anita Park hosted members of *Robb Report* for an action-packed day at the races.

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Bon Voyage, Bon Vivant

THE MOST REWARDING journeys are very often the unexpected ones. But no such cheerful sentiments brightened the thoughts of one traveler who crossed the Atlantic from France in 1861. A native of Reims, this anxious gentleman had hurriedly packed his bags and departed his hometown on an altogether unanticipated expedition to the suddenly war-torn United States, where only a decade before he had minted his fortune with so much ease.



Charles Camille Heidsieck shrewdly recognized that the best way to sell wine was to sell a lifestyle.

Living well had been a profitable venture for this bon vivant. Born in 1822, Charles Camille Heidsieck (pictured) belonged to a family prominent in the annals of winemaking. His great-uncle Florens-Louis Heidsieck, a German Protestant who immigrated to France, established Heidsieck & Co. in Champagne in 1785 and recruited his nephew, Charles-Henri (Charles Camille's father), to assist him in expanding the firm. The younger man performed with aplomb: In advance of the French invasion of Russia in 1812, this intrepid tradesman made his own foray into Moscow, armed with cases

of sparkling wine to sell to whichever army had cause to celebrate when the smoke of battle cleared. Charles-Henri duly initiated his son into the mysteries of the cellar, and the bold and ambitious Charles Camille, determined to produce a wine in his own style bearing his own name, in 1851, at the age of 29, formed an independent label, Charles Heidsieck (see “Tour de Blancs” and “Good-Bye Charlie,” page 60). His innate sense of adventure—and the pressing need for fresh thirsts to quench—drew him to the New World the following year.

An accomplished sportsman with a developed taste for the finer things, Charles Camille shrewdly recognized on his arrival in New York City that the best way to sell wine in this comparatively coarse country was to sell a lifestyle. To this end, he organized extravagant hunting parties and splendid receptions, during which—between volleys of gunfire and gossip—the Champagne always flowed freely. New York and Boston society embraced this charming host, and the newspapers, delighted by

his profligate entertainments, dubbed him “Champagne Charlie.” His fame soon spread from New England to New Orleans, where—to the great satisfaction and remuneration of the man now known simply as Charlie—the free-spending citizenry ate and drank with abandon. As American glasses filled with his Brut, Charlie's ledgers brimmed with black ink: Within a decade, the mannerly merchant had hired a full-time import agent in New York and sold hundreds of thousands of bottles per year.

The proprietor of Charles Heidsieck, however, savored this prosperity only briefly. His representative in the United States kept the Champagne pipeline primed by furnishing credit, and the escalating conflict between the government in Washington, D.C., and the recently formed Confederacy placed accounts representing much of his wealth in jeopardy. On reaching New York in 1861, Charlie realized his worst fears: His unscrupulous agent informed him that their Southern clients had defaulted on their payments. The Frenchman, desperate to save his firm, undertook a hazardous excursion through Union lines into Louisiana, where he learned to his dismay that his once-wealthy customers were broke. One debtor offered him a warehouse of cotton as payment, but this cargo fell prey to a Union blockade when Charlie attempted to ship it to Europe from Mobile, Ala.

The hapless businessman returned to New Orleans, hoping to sail for his home country; his hopes were dashed, however, when he discovered that the city was occupied by the Union's General Benjamin F. Butler, who promptly arrested and imprisoned him. “I should have tried him as a spy, and hanged him upon conviction as a spy,” Butler later declared, but Charlie's fame became his salvation: Communiqués between Paris and Washington eventually restored his freedom, if not his fortune. Charlie's unexpected journey had brought him no tangible reward, and back in Reims, his firm sank into bankruptcy. Yet in 1863, the astonishing voyage of another individual, a U.S. missionary, gave Champagne Charlie cause to toast. The visitor carried a packet of deeds from the brother of Charles Heidsieck's erstwhile U.S. agent granting the ruined winemaker title to a third of the land in Denver, Colo., where Champagne corks soon popped as silver mining and the Transcontinental Railroad transformed that outpost into one of the wealthiest boomtowns in North America. **R**

BRETT ANDERSON
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Prince de Galles, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Paris

For many, travel is the ultimate indulgence. It is the centerpiece of a life well lived—one full of adventure and discovery. These days, discerning travelers are seeking out luxury resorts in exotic locations, but they are also demanding something more—a cultural immersion. The world's best properties must offer impeccable service; unparalleled dining; exceptional rooms and suites; and striking locations. However, they must also provide guests with an authentic experience, one that embraces local cultures and traditions. Those ideals define The Luxury Collection, an ensemble of more than 95 luxury hotels and resorts spread out across more than 30 countries on five continents.

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destination through a variety of amenities and offerings tailored to that location. Furthermore, the collection as a whole guarantees that prospective travelers will always find what they are seeking. Travelers who desire rest and relaxation at the water's edge, for example, will be pampered at the **Hotel Cala di Volpe**, located on Italy's Emerald Coast, which offers a private, white-sand beach and an Olympic-size saltwater swimming pool.

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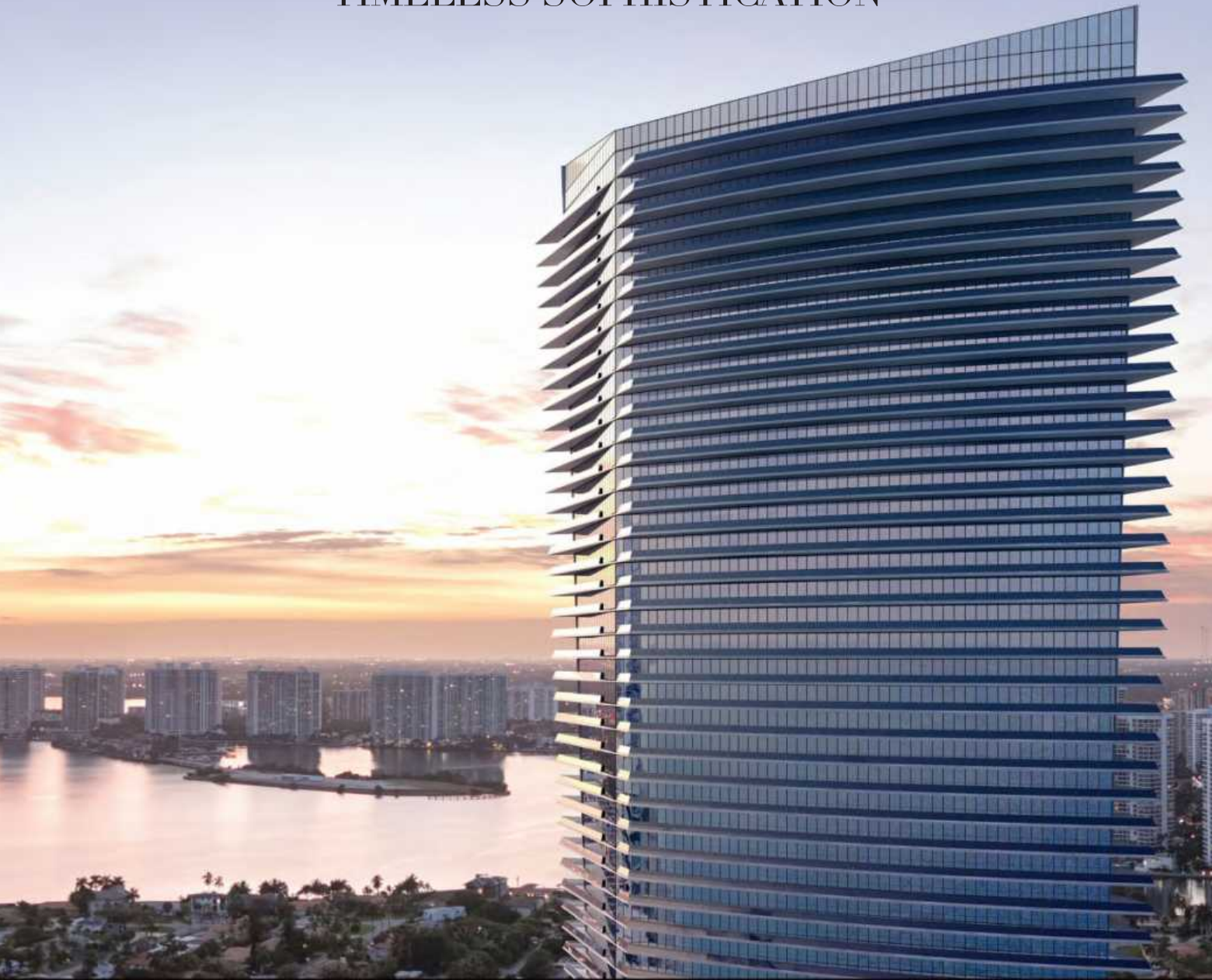
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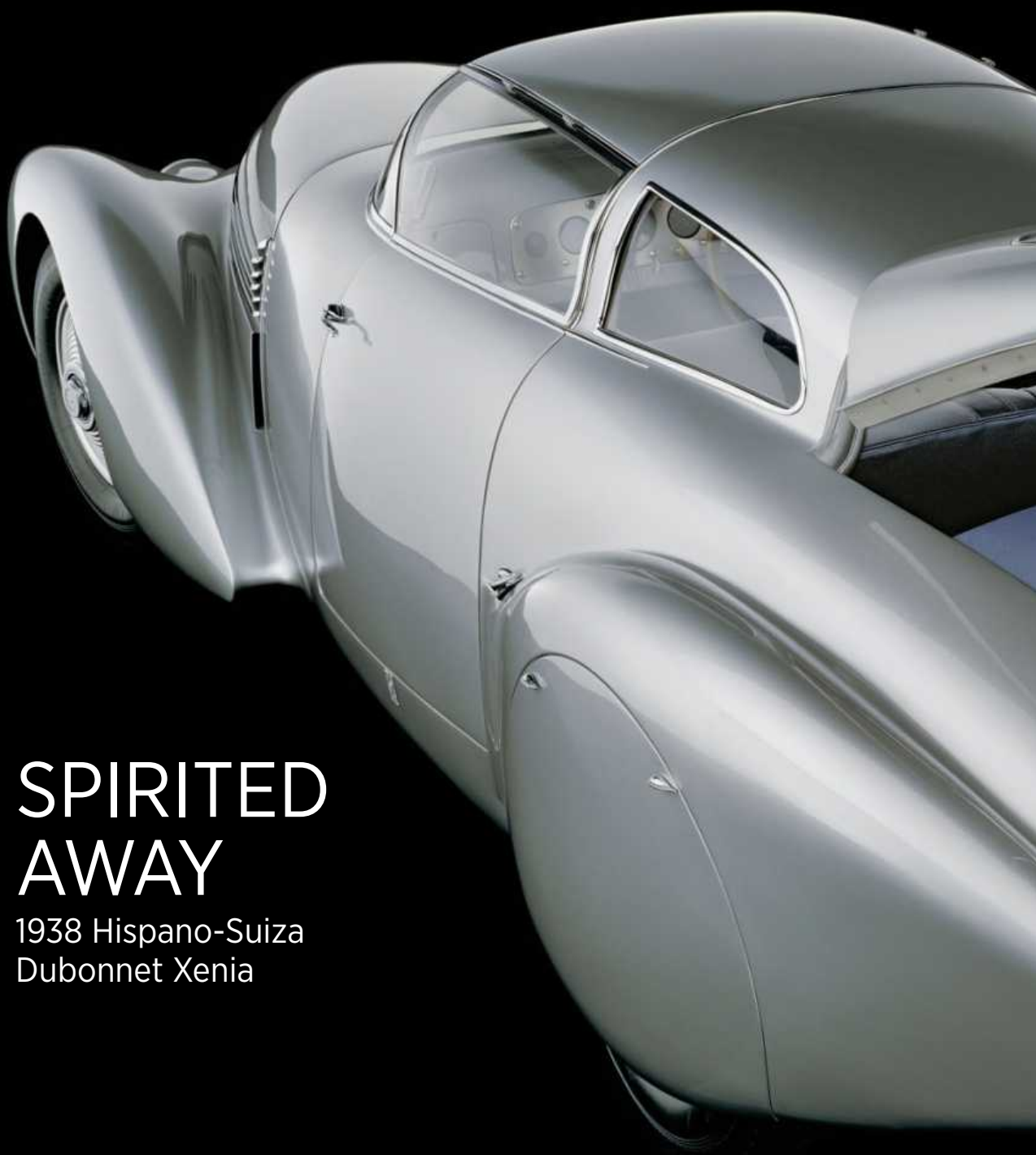


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FIJI





SPIRITED AWAY

1938 Hispano-Suiza
Dubonnet Xénia

T

HE ONE-OF-A-KIND Hispano-Suiza Xénia offered its occupants a smooth ride and a panoramic view of the road. Its aerodynamic body, the epitome of art deco style, was constructed by the French coachbuilder Jacques Saoutchik and penned by Jean Andreau, who designed aircraft as well as automobiles. Accordingly, the car resembles an aircraft fuselage

and features the first-ever curved glass windshield, which combines with the curved side windows to evoke a cockpit canopy.

Under the bullet-shaped hood was Hispano-Suiza's H6 engine, which was developed in the 1920s. It generated nearly 160 hp—enough power for the streamlined, lightweight Xénia to reach a top speed of 125 mph.



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The car was commissioned by André Dubonnet, who named it after his deceased wife. Dubonnet was the son of Joseph Dubonnet, founder of the eponymous aperitif company. He was also a World War I fighter pilot, amateur racecar driver, inventor, and entrepreneur. He equipped the Xenia with a four-wheel independent coil-spring suspension that he developed and patented and

later sold to GM, Alfa Romeo, and other automakers.

The cabin, lined in blue leather, included a rear seat that was cramped and stuffy but well lit thanks to the triangular window built into the radically tapering trunk lid. The trunk contains three precisely fitted pieces of Louis Vuitton luggage in a blue leather that matches the car's interior. —ROBERT ROSS

THE LAYOVER

A portable lounge for points in between.



M

ARCEL WANDERS'S first-ever creation for Louis Vuitton (louisvuitton.com) allows stylish excursionists to recline anytime, anywhere, in comfort. "With this particular piece, we concentrated more on the way our bodies move and the positions we achieve when we recline," says the Dutch designer,

whose Lounge Chair (price upon request) comprises three lightweight yet durable carbon-fiber-covered modules that fit together like a puzzle and unfold for configuration as a recliner, an armchair, or a stool. A recent addition to the Objets Nomades series, which debuted in 2012, the seating carries on the French

“THIS PIECE . . . CHAMPIONS
THE BALANCE BETWEEN LOSING
OURSELVES AND FINDING
OURSELVES ON A CONSTANT
JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY.”
—MARCEL WANDERS, DESIGNER



luxury-goods house's century-old tradition of making bespoke travel items, such as bed trunks and writing desks, for its clients with wanderlust. "This piece of furniture celebrates mobile, contemporary lifestyles and champions the balance between losing ourselves and finding ourselves on a constant journey of

discovery," says the aptly named Wanders. The Lounge Chair is on offer at Louis Vuitton's new Miami Design District shop through February 10 in the tan-colored version shown here and in a turquoise option—a nod to Miami's art deco architecture. After the 10th, it will be available by special order. —JILL NEWMAN

R Of Note

From David Arnold,

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of *Robb Report*

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ELEMENTS OF STYLE

Pack and Play

SPEND SERIOUS TIME planning a vacation but leave packing to the last minute, and you are sure to forget a few essentials. For help building a stylish travel wardrobe that covers all the bases—city, beach, mountain, and more—we asked Bruce Pask, fashion director for **Bergdorf Goodman's Men's Store** (bergdorfgoodman.com/mens), to share his must-haves for the road this season. —JILL NEWMAN



CITY

For exploring a metropolis or a megalopolis, Pask—himself a seasoned traveler—recommends this **Berluti** cotton travel jacket (\$2,310) because “the unlined, unconstructed cotton piqué can be rolled up in your bag, and when you put it on it still has shape.” He also likes the **Globetrotter** trolley suitcase (\$1,930), **Master & Dynamic** headphones (\$400), and **Common Projects for Goodman's** sneakers (\$400), which he says look sharp when paired with casual or dress attire.

BEACH

Seaside destinations require lightweight items that are adaptable for temperatures warm and cool, and Pask points to **Goodman's** cashmere hoodie (\$595), which delivers a pop of color. Also versatile are these **Brunello Cucinelli** espadrilles (\$925), shoes that Pask says are "perfect for poolside or the beach, and look equally chic with trousers and a dress shirt at dinner." He never leaves home without a swimsuit, such as this **Orlebar Brown** print model (\$275), and he favors **Barton Perreira** Goodman sunglasses (\$395) and an **Albertus Swanepoel** straw hat (\$165).





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MOUNTAIN

This season's well-appointed ski jackets offer warmth and comfort on the slopes but also look good over a sport coat, notes Pask.

He says this **Yves Salomon** anthracite cotton parka (\$2,125), with fur trim and a detachable fur lining, is a great choice: "I love to juxtapose the utilitarian

look of this ski jacket with a tailored flannel suit."

Skiers can also stay snug and stylish with a

Goodman's crewneck snowflake cashmere sweater (\$650),

Aquatalia shearling-lined suede boots

(\$695), a **Goodman's** Il Borgo wool scarf (\$575),

Tom Ford sunglasses (\$425), **Hestra** gloves

(\$325), and an

Elisabeth Weinstock snakeskin flask (\$285).



LISA CHARLES WATSON; STYLING BY CHARLES W. BUNGARDNER

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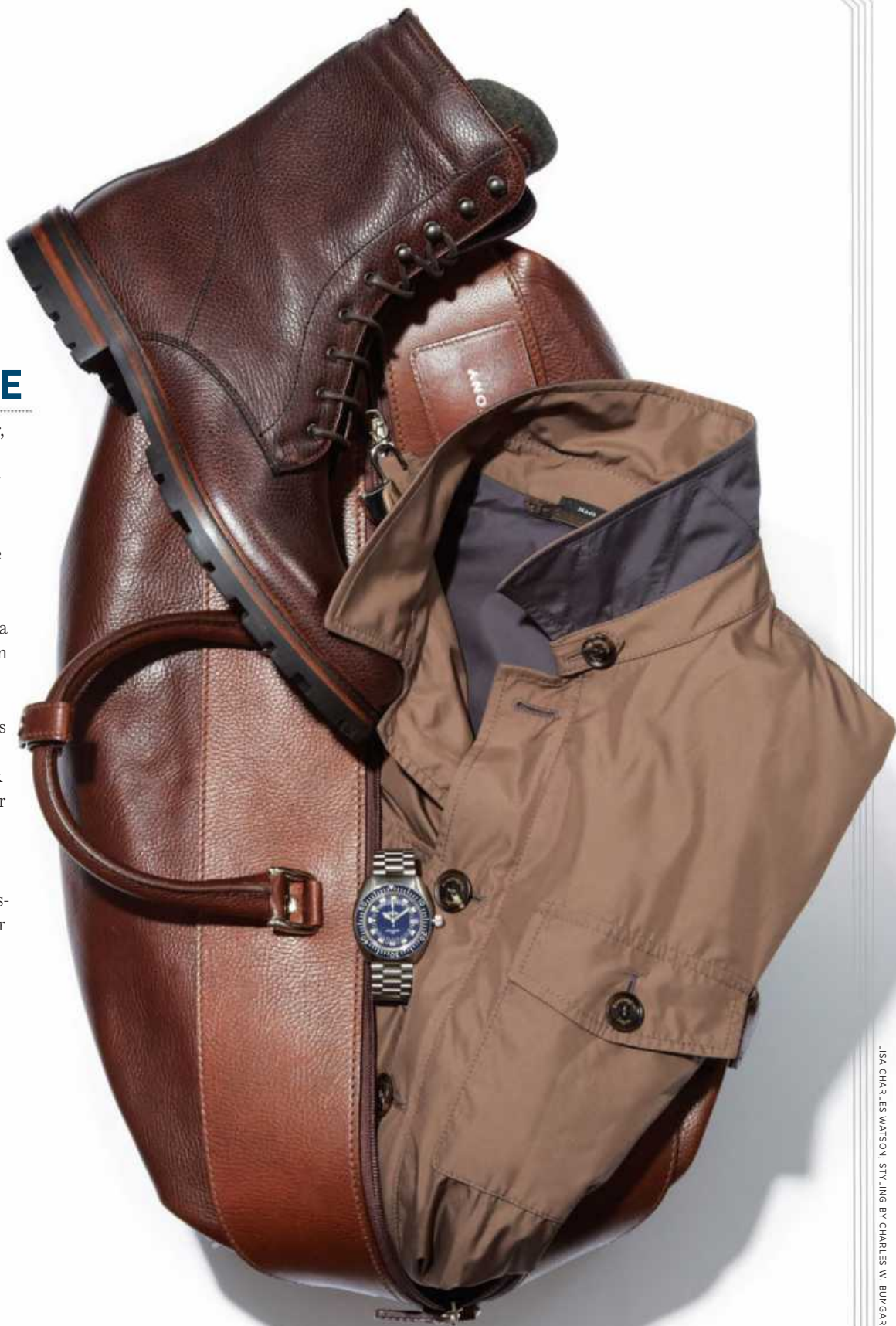
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ANYWHERE

A durable windbreaker, such as this **Zegna** safari-style microfiber jacket (\$1,995), is an all-around performer, according to Pask. The go-to garment can be rolled up to fit into a backpack, but it adds a sophisticated flair when worn with jeans or trousers. These **Aquatalia** leather boots (\$695) also sport a rugged yet refined look that works in the city or on the mountain. A practical **T. Anthony** leather duffel (\$1,400) and an **Omega** stainless-steel vintage Seamaster (\$4,900) complete the journey.



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MAGNIFICENT MACHINES

Runway Model

WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING that his new aircraft looks like a jet fighter, David Loury compares the **Cobalt Co50 Valkyrie** (cobalt-aircraft.com) to a car. “Talk to pilots about what they want in a plane, and they will tell you they want speed, safety, comfort, and cool looks—the same things you want in a car,” says Loury, a native of France who in 2007 established Cobalt, which is now based in San Francisco. “But in the aviation industry, being concerned with aesthetics can be looked down on. It’s not considered as noble as being concerned with functional matters.” The Co50 Valkyrie, Cobalt’s inaugural model, has plenty of ramp presence, and it promises to function just fine. According to Loury, its top speed of 299 mph makes it the fastest production-model



single-engine piston plane. The aircraft’s canard design should prevent it from stalling in the air, and the placement of the engine at the rear reduces cabin noise. Initially, each plane will be certified individually after it is built. The introductory price is about \$700,000. —LARRY BEAN

**FLIGHT PLAN**

Deliveries of the Co50 Valkyrie are expected to begin in 2017.



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Racing Trips

A TRIP TO LAS VEGAS can now include participation in the **EXR Racing Series** (exrseries.com) of arrive-and-drive auto races. Competitions will take place at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway and other venues. Each driver pilots an identical EXR LV02—a lightweight (1,653 pounds) car powered by a 230 hp 4-cylinder engine—in 20-minute sprints or in endurance races that can last as long as six hours. Prices range from just under \$5,000 per person for a single sprint race to nearly \$140,000 per team for a VIP package of six endurance races. The first event, a sprint race, is February 20 in Las Vegas. —L.B.



SIMPLE TWIST

OPERATING THE SIGNATURE feature of the **Richard Mille RM 63-02 World Timer** (richardmille.com) is a straightforward process. The rotating bezel on the \$145,000 timepiece displays the names of major cities in each of the world's 24 time zones. Once you turn the city corresponding to the local time zone to the 12 o'clock position, you can determine the time in any other zone by noting the appropriate city. While the operation is simple, the ball bearing system that underlies the feature embodies the type of intricacy expected in a Richard Mille watch. —JAMES D. MALCOLMSON



Fearless Fliers

THE U.K.-BASED AIRCRAFT-CHARTER provider **PrivateFly** (privatefly.com) is offering a customized weeklong Caribbean itinerary for aviation enthusiasts, or “avgeeks.” Travelers can fly to St. Martin from New York (starting at \$32,000 per person) or their location of choice in a Gulfstream G650, which will nearly graze the sand of Maho Beach as it approaches the island’s airport. Day trips from St. Martin can include flights in smaller aircraft to St. Barts and Saba. Landing at the St. Barts airport requires an extremely steep descent, and the airport at Saba has what is claimed to be the world’s shortest commercial runway (shown above, at right). —L.B.

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CROSS-COUNTRY

From top: Carrots with dates, Urfa pepper, and pecans at Mourad in San Francisco; Upland in New York City; Nightbell in Asheville, N.C.; Spoon and Stable in Minneapolis.



CULINARY MASTERS

Destination Dining

FOR FOUR YEARS, *Robb Report* has asked the most celebrated chefs in the world a single question: Who is the up-and-coming chef you admire most? Their answers become the nominees in our annual Culinary Masters Competition, and you can read about this year's contest in "*Robb Report's* New Culinary Master for 2016" (page 126). But those answers also provide some glimpses into the future. In the short time since their nominations, the groundbreaking chefs chosen by the likes of Daniel Boulud, José Andrés, and Nancy Silverton have indeed gone on to great things: Some of the most exciting new restaurants in the country are run by Culinary Masters nominees.

In New York City, Justin Smillie opened his first restaurant, **Upland** (uplandnyc.com; nominated by Nancy Silverton), where his seasonal, bold-flavored cooking won instant acclaim and full reservation books. George Mendes expanded upon his elegant Portuguese menu at Aldea with a new restaurant featuring rustic Portuguese fare, **Lupulu** (lupulunyc.com; Daniel Boulud).

On the West Coast, two nominees earned a Michelin star last fall: Mourad Lahlou was recognized for his modern Moroccan cuisine at **Mourad** (mouradsf.com; Michael Mina), and Nicolas Delaroque for his subtle French fare at **Nico** (nicosf.com; Nancy Oakes). In Los Angeles, Josef Centeno added a classic American venue, **Ledlow** (ledlowla.com; Wolfgang Puck), to his downtown L.A. empire.

Gavin Kaysen's departure from Daniel Boulud's restaurant group (and New York City) inspired a *New York Times* feature on promising chefs striking out for new territory. In Kaysen's case, that was Minneapolis, where he opened **Spoon and Stable** (spoonandstable.com; Eric Ripert). Katie Button of Cúrate in Asheville, N.C.—the winner of the inaugural competition—opened a small-plates restaurant called **Nightbell** (thenightbell.com; José Andrés). And in Dallas, last year's winner, Nick Badovinus, earned raves for a new burger spot, **Off Site Kitchen** (oskdallas.com; Dean Fearing), while working on a highly anticipated seafood restaurant, Montlake Cut.

—MICHAELNE BUSICO

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Tour de Blancs



WHETHER TO SIMPLY toast the new year or to wish embarking loved ones *un bon voyage*, a ready supply of fine Champagne is particularly de rigueur during this busy season; and no bottle of bubbly travels more tastefully than **Charles Heidsieck 1995 Blanc des Millénaires Brut** (charlesheidsieck.com, \$250). This rare sparkling wine is vinified from 100 percent Chardonnay by the storied house whose eponymous—and peripatetic—founder has been recently honored with a limited-edition set of luggage (see “Good-Bye Charlie,” this page). Culled from five specially selected crus from the Côte des Blancs, Blanc des Millénaires has been produced only three times: in 1983, 1985, and 1995, all exceptional vintages for Champagne’s only sanctioned white varietal. This extraordinary example sparkles in the glass like a pale-yellow diamond and takes one on a sensory journey that encompasses notes of vanilla cream, marzipan, candied cherry, orange zest, ginger, and caramel. —BRETT ANDERSON



Ship Shape

DINING EN ROUTE to a destination tends to be a cheerless matter of relieving hunger or boredom. Michael C. Fina aims to make those meals a more memorable part of the journey with a new line of tableware for yachts and private jets. The **Hemisphere Marine Blue Collection** (\$78 to \$312 per piece, michaelcfina.com) is thinner and lighter than most porcelain, with a larger foot for increased stability and generous rims to catch sloshes. Hemisphere, a classic pattern made by the French porcelain house Jean Louis Coquet, has also been streamlined, with fewer and more versatile pieces, and updated in a jaunty sea blue developed by Steven Fina, owner of Michael C. Fina. “We envisioned serving a beautiful lunch on our family’s yacht, and we wanted the blue to really stand out against the white backdrop,” he says. “But the collection can be used on any table, whether it be on a yacht, plane, or a summer home.” —M.B.

GOOD-BYE CHARLIE

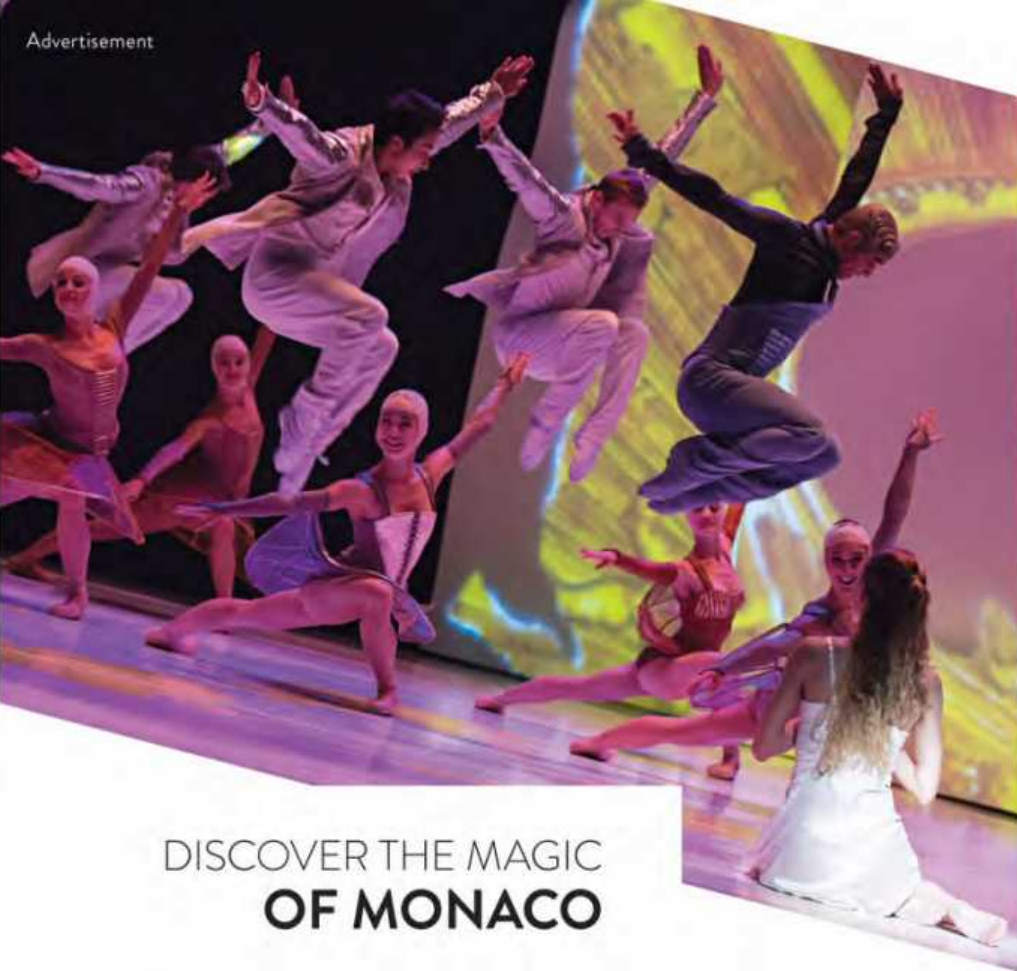
CHARLES HEIDSIECK—THE INTREPID founder of Champagne Charles Heidsieck—cultivated the U.S. market for bubbly in the 1800s on four long, revel-filled trips during which he garnered the nickname Champagne Charlie. He surely would have appreciated the limited-edition travel tote that the Champagne house has created in his honor. The **Bon Voyage** bag (\$6,000, charlesheidsieck.com) is crafted from full-grain Italian leather with an interior of Alcantara suede. It arrives packed with a tasting notebook and hand-embossed stationery, six handcrafted flutes, an ash walking stick, and four bottles of Charles Heidsieck, including the 1995 Blanc de Millénaires Brut (see “Tour de Blancs,” this page). Only 29 bags were made, in honor of Heidsieck’s age when he first set foot in the United States. —CAROLYN MEERS





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LES BALLETS DE MONTE-CARLO

The official company of the Principality of Monaco, Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo was founded in 1985 by Her Royal Highness The Princess of Hanover in accordance with the wishes of her mother, Princess Grace of Monaco. Under the direction of Jean-Christophe Maillot, the company of 50 today carries on the illustrious history of modern dance in Monaco. Their repertoire features contemporary creations as well as works by internationally acclaimed choreographers who are regularly invited to Monaco.

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Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo: *Cinderella*

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Under the Presidency of Her Royal Highness The Princess of Hanover and led by talented choreographer-director Jean-Christophe Maillot, Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo will bring to life Prokofiev's timeless classic with a chic 21st century reimagining for a modern audience. Four performances only at New York City Center.

Flavors of Monaco

February 15-20

Osteria del Circo, located across the street from New York City Center, and sister restaurant *Le Cirque* will host Chef Paolo Sari for a week of farm-to-table cuisine focusing on Monégasque and Mediterranean delicacies. Sari is the Executive Chef of the Monte-Carlo Beach Hotel's *Elsa*, the world's only 100% organic Michelin-starred restaurant.

Inside Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo

February 17-22

Monaco-born photographer Alice Blangero captures Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo's rarest and most intimate moments through a collection of her works on exhibit at Christie's, Rockefeller Center.

For information and tickets, visit monaco-nyc.com.



Left page:

Les Ballets de
Monte-Carlo - *Cinderella*
© Alice Blangero

Casino de Monte-Carlo
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Monte-Carlo Philharmonic
Orchestra-Princely
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Right page:

Les Ballets de
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Morocco Modern

TADELAKT PLASTER WALLS, handwoven rugs, and *zellige* mosaics are nothing new in the Red City.

But at the **Mandarin Oriental, Marrakech**, which opened in October, such traditional touches form only part of the picture. Infused with Mandarin Oriental's high-gloss style in a sleek black-and-white palette, the hotel's 63 suites and villas strike an intricate balance between historic Morocco and modern-day minimalism. The harmonious blend extends to the kitchen, where the Moroccan chef Meryem Cherkaoui (formerly of Paris's Hôtel de Crillon) brings new life to traditional favorites. At least one local custom, however, remains intact at the Mandarin Oriental: Lined with colorful tiles, the spa's two hammams offer suitably ornate settings for indulgent Moroccan treatments.

—CYNTHIA ROSENFELD

WHAT: Mandarin Oriental's first African property features 63 suites and villas (each with a private swimming pool), a 19,375-square-foot spa, and three restaurants. **WHERE:** A short drive from the medina, the hotel is on 50 lush acres of olive groves and gardens—all looking out to the Atlas Mountains. **WHY:** In a city filled with first-rate hotels, the Mandarin Oriental is one of the few contemporary-style options. **Mandarin Oriental, Marrakech**, mandarinoriental.com (\$1,030–\$4,300)

GEORGE APOSTOLIDIS



True Tico

ALBERTO ESQUIVEL had intended to build a family home in the foothills of Costa Rica's Talamanca Mountains, a modest country abode where his children could ride Andalusian horses among grazing cattle. Five years after breaking ground, the Costa Rican native has instead created **Hacienda AltaGracia**, Central America's most exciting and authentic new luxury resort. Opened last June—and operated since July by Auberge Resorts—the 860-acre property offers a true taste of Costa Rica with morning hikes to see sloths and toucans, afternoon trail rides through the mountains (the resort houses 46 purebred horses in pristine stables), and evening swims in the spa's stunning hilltop pool. For a bird's-eye glimpse of Esquivel's passion project and the surrounding farmland and forest, take to the skies in AltaGracia's ultralight plane, gliding low and slow over tiered coffee plantations and 100-foot waterfalls. —LISA SWEETINGHAM



WHAT: A homegrown Costa Rican retreat featuring 50 elegant casitas, a spa, and three restaurants. **WHERE:** Set on 860 private acres at the foot of the Talamanca range in southern Costa Rica's Pérez Zeledón canton. **WHY:** Costa Rica's most authentic luxury experience, blissfully removed from the country's well-worn tourist trail. **Hacienda AltaGracia, an Auberge Resort**, aubegeresorts.com (\$350–\$1,500)



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Taking Flight

STEPPING OUT OF the helicopter that brings you to **andBeyond Benguerra Island**, you trade one whirling bird for a cast of thousands. The resort, which reopened in June after a multimillion-dollar renovation by the safari company andBeyond, occupies a sandy beach on Mozambique's Benguerra Island, where the more than 140 avian species range from kingfishers to flamingos. Each morning, the feathered locals provide a melodic soundtrack for the property's 13 thatched cabanas and *casinhas*, which feature swinging daybeds, infinity-edge pools, and outdoor rain showers. Indeed, the wildlife at Benguerra is a highlight, but the resort is foremost a sublime escape where lazy beach days can be followed by sundowners at the resort's dhow turned bar. —SARAH KHAN



WHAT: The \$5.5 million renovation of andBeyond's far-flung—and formerly rustic—Benguerra Island lodge. **WHERE:** On the shores of the second-largest landmass in Mozambique's Bazaruto National Park, a marine wildlife sanctuary spanning six islands. **WHY:** A paradisiacal retreat equally suited to bird-watchers, post-safari beachcombers, and divers in search of an underwater adventure. **andBeyond Benguerra Island**, andbeyond.com (\$765–\$880 per person per night)



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Beach Beauty

THE NEW **Faena Hotel Miami Beach** is an extravagance even by South Florida standards. Opened in November, just in time to welcome the stylish Art Basel crowds, the posh property overlooking Miami Beach is the most recent addition to the Faena District development taking shape along six blocks of Collins Avenue. As part of this ambitious undertaking, the Argentine developer Alan Faena has transformed the 1940s-era Saxony Hotel with the help of a who's who of the art world, from Damien Hirst (whose sculpture *Golden Myth* graces the modern Asian restaurant Pao) to the Australian director Baz Luhrmann (who helped design the hotel's interiors). Art aficionados will have another reason to check in to the Faena this April, when Rem Koolhaas's Faena Forum cultural center debuts across the street. —CAROLINA BUIA



WHAT: Argentine businessman Alan Faena's latest hotel project features 169 rooms, a 217-seat cabaret theater, and a 22,000-square-foot spa. **WHERE:** Miami Beach's most desirable new development, the Faena District, occupying six blocks along ritzy Collins Avenue. **WHY:** A burgeoning arts scene collides with over-the-top luxuries at the heart of the Miami Beach action. **Faena Hotel Miami Beach** faena.com (\$745–\$1,200)



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GRAND OPENINGS



Spoils of the Vine

PORTUGAL'S DOURO RIVER does not rush but rather flows gently past the terraced vineyards of Europe's oldest wine country. The **Six Senses Douro Valley**—which opened in July on a hill overlooking the river—is an appropriately soothing retreat that inhabits one of the valley's historic *quintas* (wine estates). The bounty of the local vines permeates the guest experience at the resort, from the proprietary red blends produced by the in-house winemaker to the hand soaps milled from grape seeds and olive oil. In the 57 guest rooms, modern furnishings reflect the Bangkok-based Six Senses' Asian roots. The Vale d'Abraão restaurant, however, is Iberian through and through, with Portuguese delicacies coming fresh from a Jospier grill.

—CYNTHIA ROSENFELD



WHAT: Six Senses' first European resort, featuring 57 contemporary rooms, suites, and villas in a 19th-century *quinta*. **WHERE:** Set on 20 acres in the Douro Valley, Portugal's centuries-old winemaking region and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

WHY: An on-site winemaker and sommelier, a wine library, and a series of vineyard excursions—including helicopter tours to top *quintas* in the region—offer ample opportunities to discover the local ports and reds. **Six Senses Douro Valley**, sixsenses.com (\$270–\$1,700)



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The Oracle of Lanai

SINCE ACQUIRING LANAI from his fellow mogul David Murdock in 2012, Larry Ellison has tinkered constantly with the Hawaiian island's only beach resort. He redesigned its lobby three times in three years, opened a Nobu restaurant on the property—only to renovate and reopen it a few months later—and shut down an entire wing of the resort to re-create it to his contemporary-Hawaiian tastes. Eventually, last June, Ellison shuttered the **Four Seasons Resort Lanai** to finalize its multimillion-dollar transformation, overhauling its remaining guest-room wing and adding an adults-only pool with waterfalls and private cabanas. Judging from an advance visit to the Four Seasons, which is scheduled to reopen in February, Ellison's perfectionism has paid off, producing what might just be the perfect Hawaiian getaway. —BRUCE WALLIN



WHAT: A classic beach resort with 217 guest rooms and all the requisite trappings, including an awe-inspiring cliff-top golf course. **WHERE:** Overlooking Manele Bay and a golden crescent of sand on the sparsely populated Pineapple Island of Lanai. **WHY:** For couples, families, and anyone else in search of a true Hawaiian retreat minus the crowds, condos, and chain stores. **Four Seasons Resort Lanai**, fourseasons.com (\$1,000–\$21,000)

A HIDDEN GEM AMONGST THE GIANTS



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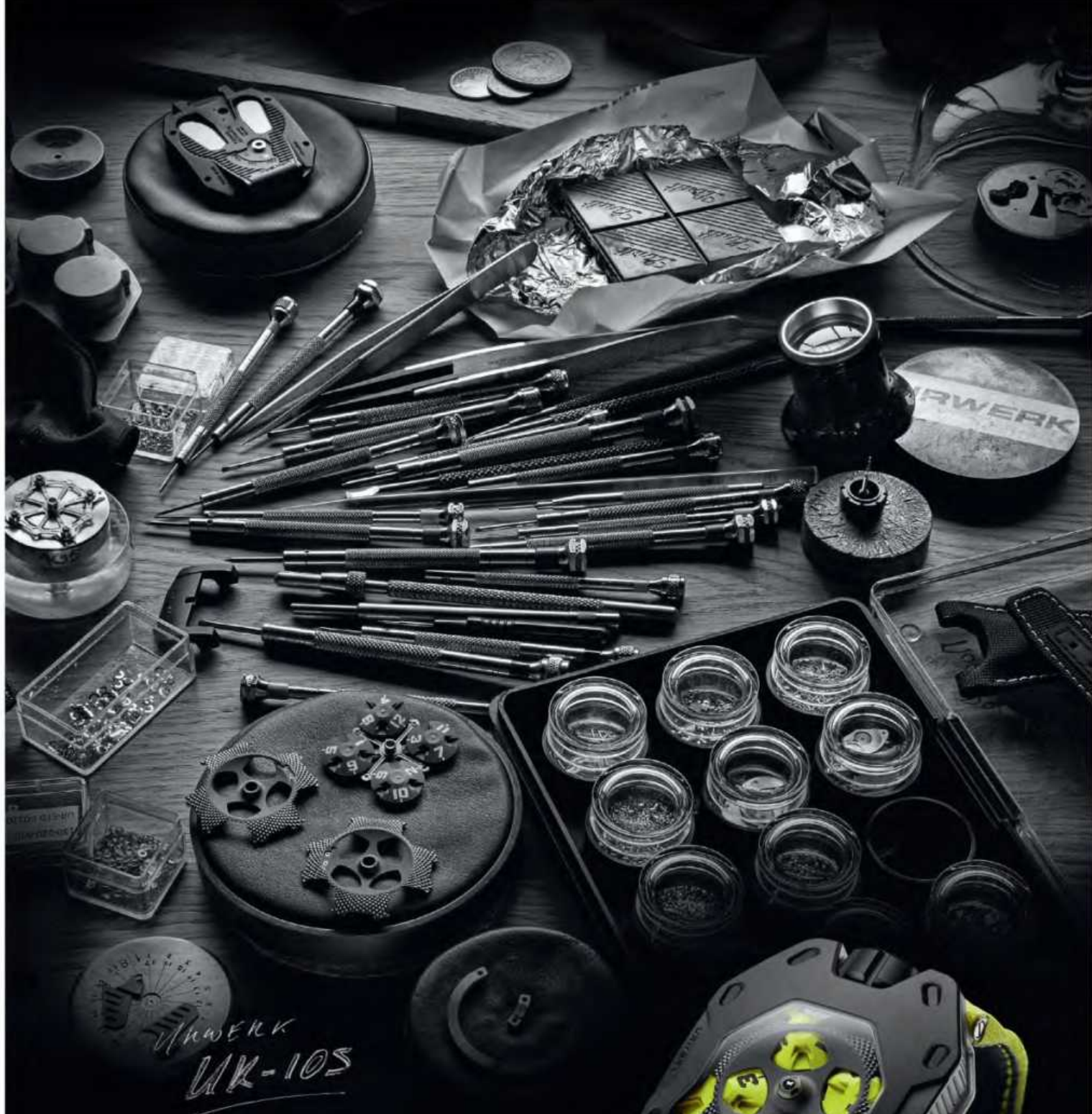


Glass House

IN 1920, THE FRENCH designer René Lalique ventured to the northern region of Alsace to build a home for his glassmaking company. Lalique also needed a home for himself, and so he constructed a timber-framed villa just a mile from the factory. Nearly a century later, the home has opened as a six-suite retreat that reflects its former owner and the company he founded. Unveiled in September, **Villa René Lalique** is decorated with historic family photos, Maison Lalique furnishings, and crystal accents. Adjacent to the home, a new glass pavilion designed by Mario Botta houses a 20,000-bottle wine room and a restaurant run by Jean-Georges Klein, longtime chef of the Michelin three-star L'Arnsbourg. Hanging in the dining room is a glittering crystal chandelier that Lalique designed in 1928 for the Orient Express. —CASEY HATFIELD-CHIOTTI 



WHAT: French designer René Lalique's historic mansion turned luxury hotel.
WHERE: Wingen-sur-Moder, a small village in Alsace, roughly one mile from the original Lalique factory and Musée Lalique. **WHY:** Art, architecture, and gourmet fare make for a high-style couples' hideaway in the French countryside.
Villa René Lalique, villarenelalique.com (about \$380–\$1,300)



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R Of Note

From David Arnold,

Senior Vice President/Group Publisher
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Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts recently announced the second year of Taste of Waldorf Astoria, a global culinary program in partnership with the James Beard Foundation. This fall, the search for the next iconic dish continues with a fresh group of five hand-selected James Beard Foundation Rising Star chefs dispatching to five Waldorf Astoria destinations, including Amsterdam, New Orleans, Beijing, Jerusalem and Orlando. The winning dish will be selected by a panel of culinary luminaries in New York this February.



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BELIEVING IN BALI

*Balinese luxury resorts are taking travelers
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sounds, and smells of Indonesia's magical isle.*

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JACKIE CARADONIO



“It will

only work if you believe,” Awi says to me as we kneel together on the beach in the glow of the 7 am sun. The morning tide is low—so low that I could easily walk 100 yards before the water reaches the hem of my purple sarong. The damp sand stretches out before us in little braids, formed by the last ripples of the sea that receded in the middle of the night. As the Ritz-Carlton, Bali, slowly stirs to life behind us—and the *pemangku*, or Balinese temple priest, completes his morning prayer—I prepare to have my soul purified.

Awi is the priest’s assistant, or *sutri*, who is guiding me on the morning’s spiritual journey. She turns toward the *pemangku*, closes her eyes, and presses her palms together in front of her face. I imitate her movements, squinting out of the corner of my right eye to survey my surroundings. The priest, dressed all in white with a small flower tucked into his headdress, is encircled by gifts for the gods: giant coconuts, silver platters piled high with flowers and grass, rupiahs laid neatly over latticed palm leaves. Awi cups her hands, and the *pemangku* pours holy water into them. She takes a sip; I do the same. Our divine leader then tosses ripped palm leaves at us and smears a smattering of liquids—egg yolk, I suspect, and perhaps ground dill or basil—on our foreheads and necks. The low sun’s golden rays peek over his shoulders, nearly blinding me as he begins his mantra.

The soul-purification ritual, or *melukat*, is performed at any new phase in Balinese life: a marriage, a birth, a new moon. Sitting on the beach in front of the Ritz-Carlton, which opened early last year on the southern Nusa Dua peninsula, I realize I am celebrating a new phase not in my own life but in Bali’s. The Indonesian island—known devoutly as the Island of Gods—has long been a popular



destination, with an elite collection of luxury hotels. These days, however, Bali is increasingly welcoming new properties that go beyond the requisite swimming pools and presidential-size suites to offer a deeper connection to its vibrant culture and mystic charms.

At the Ritz-Carlton, of course, all the requisite luxuries are in place. When I arrived at the 313-room property, I settled into one of the resort’s Sky Villas, a rooftop penthouse where the views from the infinity-edge pool seemed to stretch to the farthest ends of the Indian Ocean. Dinner my first night was a five-course meal at Bejana, the signature Indonesian restaurant, where dishes such as the Sumatran-style braised beef are among the island’s best. But it is a morning at the Kedonganan fish market, an evening watching a performance of the fabled Hindu epic the *Ramayana*, and my sunrise *melukat*—all arranged for me by the Ritz-Carlton—that provide meaningful new perspectives on the classic Balinese holiday.

A similar symbiosis of sybaritic pleasure and cultural discovery is taking place at properties throughout Bali. In Seminyak, the new Alila Seminyak is almost too sleek in style, its minimalist decor in some ways distancing guests from the destination at hand. But the resort’s menu of customized cultural experiences provides deep

A one-bedroom pool villa (above) and the cliff-top swimming pool (opposite) at Mandapa. Previous spread: Mandapa’s vintage Volkswagen 181 (left) and a mansion pool at the Bulgari Resort Bali (right).





The pool at the Ritz-Carlton, Bali (left), and the authentic interiors of a mansion at the Bulgari Resort Bali (right).



immersion, ranging from lessons in the art of *djamoe* (an herbal healing therapy that originated in nearby Java) to the craft of traditional *canang sari* prayer offerings, made from banana leaves and flower petals. At the Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay, new programs include a cooking academy and classes led by master yogis. In Ubud, the 27-year-old Amandari will soon add to its list of cultural offerings a series of wellness retreats run by local and international experts.

The Bulgari Resort Bali—from the famed Italian luxury-goods brand—may seem an odd place to find a genuine slice of Balinese culture. But the property on the cliffs of the Bukit Peninsula is sprinkled with the same types of spiritual monuments and wild vegetation found in villages throughout the island. Stone pathways lined with mossy walls and blossoming frangipani trees connect the various *balé*-style villas and the resort's new mansions. Debuted in 2014, the five mansions bring to life a supersized version of Indonesian artisanship and design with handwoven *songket* textiles from Klungkung, hand-cut volcanic-rock walls, and local antiques.

As I sit in my mansion's sprawling dining room slurping *soto pesmol*—a fiery and savory soup that I have identified as Bali's greatest culinary treasure—I search for some break in the Bulgari's all-too-convincing Indonesian style. When my butler, Sunny—so called for his cheerful disposition—steps away, I investigate a sleek porcelain teapot, surely an import from Italy. Alas, a peek

at the bottom reveals a handwritten imprint from a local designer. Similar stamps of authenticity appear on every plate and mug on my table. On the wall above, I investigate a black-and-white image of a mass prayer ritual. The signature at the bottom reveals its photographer to be the famed Indonesian artist Rio Helmi. The one departure I do identify is on my menu, where—not entirely disappointingly—Bulgari's origins are reflected in dishes ranging from ravioli alla carbonara to burrata pugliese.

Of the many new reasons to visit Bali, perhaps the most compelling is Mandapa. Opened in September on a snaking bend in Ubud's rushing Ayung River, the Ritz-Carlton Reserve property aims to deliver a cultural experience unlike that of any other Balinese resort.

I pass through the 60-room Mandapa's bright-orange *candi bentar*—the traditional split gate leading to a Balinese temple—on a typically balmy afternoon. A verdant valley unfolds before me, dotted with sacred trees, ancient temples, and crumbling statues. A neon-green rice field cuts through the heart of the resort,



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dropping down to the shore of the Ayung River.

During my time at Mandapa, I waded through knee-deep muddy water in the rice paddy, sowing the first seeds of the new season's harvest. At the spa, a blind healer from nearby Bangli pounds and twists my body in all the right places. And at the Sawah Terrace, I dine on a Balinese specialty: suckling pig, cooked to crispy perfection for 36 hours.

Of course, nothing—not even slow-cooked suckling pig—can compete with the Bali outside. So early one morning, I meet Mandapa's guide, Dewa, for a tour of Ubud in the resort's vintage convertible Volkswagen 181. The car is an old Balinese relic, having served as official transport for the island's mayors during the 1960s and '70s. There are no seat belts and the doors only open from the outside, but boy, is it a cool ride.

Zippering through Ubud, my straw hat flying off my head at nearly every turn, we pass magnificent amphitheaters of rice fields, where vibrant spikes of emerald tumble down in circling orbits. At Bali Pulina, we sip one of the world's rarest and most expensive coffees, *kopi luwak*,



whose rich flavor Dewa tells me comes from beans that have been “processed” in the digestive tract of Bali's cat-like Asian palm civet.

When we arrive at the holy-springs temple of Tirta Empul, Dewa ties a green sarong around my waist and the two of us wander among the streaming pools where locals purify themselves in solo versions of the *melukat*. In a square lined with bright-pink walls adorned with statues of the guardian Kala, preparations have begun for the next week's mass purification ritual. The ceremony occurs at every new moon, Dewa explains—and also in times of tragedy.

“In 1963, Mount Agung erupted,” Dewa tells me. “It destroyed our villages and killed many, but our mother temple of Besakih was miraculously spared. All the Balinese people went to the temple to pray. Because of this, the volcano has never erupted again.”

I have heard the story of Agung before. In fact, the legend—in which lava is said to have passed within a few yards of Bali's holiest temple in the eastern village of Besakih—has been a near-daily topic of conversation since I arrived in Bali. The first time I heard it, on the beach with Awi at the Ritz-Carlton, I smiled politely at what seemed like a fable. But with each telling, the story seems to grow brighter, like a gold coin being polished day after day. Here, at last—as I stand with Dewa amid a sea of devout denizens and the trees, waters, and gods they worship—I am starting to believe. **R**

Bulgari Resort Bali, bulgarihotels.com;

Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, ritzcarlton.com;

Ritz-Carlton, Bali, ritzcarlton.com

Mandapa's open-air lobby (right) and Kul-Kul (Bell) Tower (left) overlook the Ayung Gorge.

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Cape Winelands.



SOUTH AFRICA'S PERENNIALY picturesque Cape Winelands region has long been a popular day trip from Cape Town. But the birthplace of Pinotage is making a compelling—some would say conclusive—case for an extended stay among its valleys and vineyards.

The wine region, located about an hour's drive east of the city, has seen an influx of luxury lodges in recent years, beginning with **La Residence** (laresidence.co.za) and **Delaire Graff Estate** (delaire.co.za) in the late 2000s. Richard Branson made a characteristically grand appearance in 2014 when he added the hilltop **Mont Rochelle** (virginlimitededition.com) to his exclusive Virgin Limited Edition collection. The property reopened in the Franschhoek Valley after Branson poured \$3.2 million into a new

spa, two restaurants, and renovations of the 22 guest rooms.

Most active in the region is the **Leeu Collection** (leeucollection.com), which at press time was targeting a December debut for its first new hotel, the 12-room **Leeu House** in Franschhoek. The nascent brand has caused a

THE BIRTHPLACE OF PINOTAGE IS MAKING A CASE FOR AN EXTENDED STAY.

buzz in the Winelands with its recent acquisitions of the legendary **Le Quartier Français** restaurants and hotel (lqf.co.za) and the Swartland's master of Syrah, **Mullineux** (mlf.wines.com). This April, Leeu will debut its best excuse for a Winelands jaunt: **Leeu Estates**, a 168-acre wine farm and hotel built around a 19th-century Cape Dutch house. —SARAH KHAN



Above: Leeu House. Left and opposite: Richard Branson's Mont Rochelle. Page 91: The Messner Mountain Museum Corones in Italy's Dolomites.

TOP: DANIE NEL; BOTTOM AND OPPOSITE: JACK BROCKWAY

Sri Lanka.



Above: Æni Villas Sri Lanka. Opposite, from top: Adler Mountain Lodge; sailing off the coast of Bermuda.

MARCO POLO CALLED Sri Lanka “the finest island of its size in all the world” when he landed on the teardrop-shaped isle’s shores in the 13th century. Similar superlatives could easily be applied today to the country, where new resorts stretch from the palm-fringed shores of the west and south to the wild nature reserves of the east.

On the shores of Koggala Lake, the 11-room **Tri Lanka** (trilanka.com) opened in December with a restaurant helmed by the former chef at Seychelles’ North Island. Also in December, roughly an hour’s drive east, **Æni Villas** (anivillas.com)—a vacation-rental company based in Anguilla—debuted a two-villa estate above a white-sand beach in the Southern Province. The 15-bedroom property offers guests absolute privacy in a tranquil coastal village near Dickwella, along with resort-style amenities such as an ayurvedic spa and tennis courts.

This year’s openings include Sri Lanka’s first wellness

resort—the 50-acre **Santani** (santani.lk), which is slated to debut in February in the Kandy hills—as well as the **Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort** (anantara.com) on the southern coast and Dilmah Tea’s **Wild Coast Camp** (resplendentceylon.com), a 28-tent leopard-safari lodge set on a secluded beach in Yala National Park. Dilmah is also adding a new three-suite bungalow and a one-bedroom owner’s suite to its **Ceylon Tea Trails** (teatrails.com), an exquisite Relais & Châteaux property above Castlereagh Lake in Sri Lanka’s tea country.

MARCO POLO WAS AWED BY SRI LANKA IN THE 13TH CENTURY.

Linking all these new havens are freshly paved highways—an ongoing undertaking since the end of the country’s 26-year civil war in 2009. Faster still are the open skies traversed by the Colombo-based **Simplify’s** (simplify.com) fleet of helicopters and seaplanes. —CYNTHIA ROSENFELD

No. 3

Bali.

See “Believing in Bali,” page 80.

No. 4

The Dolomites.

THOUGH CERTAINLY NOT unknown, the Dolomites are often overlooked on Italian itineraries. How a region of such striking alpine beauty—especially one located just a couple hours’ drive from Venice—could escape notice is a question that may no longer need answering. Calling new attention to the area is the **Messner Mountain Museum Corones** (messner-mountain-museum.it), which opened in July atop the nearly 7,500-foot Kronplatz. The cantilevered creation by the architect Zaha Hadid is the last in a series of six museums in the Dolomites dedicated to mountaineering, for which the surrounding peaks are prime territory.

Amateur adventurers can explore the jagged terrain on the three-night Hiking in Cortina land excursion that **Silversea Cruises** (silversea.com) launched in May. Also last year, **Butterfield & Robinson** (butterfield.com) introduced new family-oriented Dolomites excursions, while **InGamba** (ingamba.pro) debuted a bicycle touring program at **Hotel La Perla** (hotel-laperla.it) in Bolzano. Keeping pace with demand, new hotels in the Dolomites include **Rosapetra Spa Resort** (rosapetracortina.it) in Cortina d’Ampezzo, **Adler Mountain Lodge** (adler-lodge.com) in Alpe di Siusi, and **Pine Lodge Dolomites** (pinedolomites.com) in Selva Gardena. —BRUCE WALLIN



No. 5

Bermuda.

IN DECEMBER 2014, the **America’s Cup** (americascup.com) announced that Bermuda would play host to the 35th edition of the prestigious sailing event, scheduled for June 2017. Sunseekers and sailing aficionados, however, have plenty of reasons to visit the North Atlantic island before the final sprint for the Auld Mug begins. The **Fairmont Hamilton Princess and Beach Club** (fairmont.com)—the official host hotel of the America’s Cup—recently put the final touches on a \$90 million renovation that added the country’s first full-service marina and a new harbor-view restaurant by celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson. The island’s most exclusive resort, **Rosewood Tucker’s Point** (rosewoodhotels.com), is also planning touch-ups in preparation for the blue-ribbon race. Come next winter, however, the **Ariel Sands Cottage Colony Hotel** (arielsands.com)—an \$85 million hotel in the works from the actors Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones—might be Bermuda’s hottest ticket for sailors and spectators alike. —JACKIE CARADONIO

SUNSEEKERS AND SAILING AFICIONADOS HAVE REASON TO VISIT BERMUDA BEFORE THE FINAL SPRINT.



Namibia.



Namibia
Exclusive's new
Sorris Sorris
Lodge.

NAMIBIA'S AUSTERE LANDSCAPE may not form the typical backdrop for an African safari, but the otherworldly terrain—bone-dry deserts, towering dunes, desolate Atlantic shores—is home to everything from big-ticket mammals to virtually unknown birds and reptiles. Add to this a fascinating combination of culture and adventure, and the country is fast becoming one of Africa's hottest destinations.

Upping Namibia's cachet is a spate of enticing lodges, led by Wilderness Safaris' new **Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp** (wilderness-safaris.com). Opened in 2014, the eight-tent camp shares the 1.1 million-acre Palmwag Concession with little more than elephants, giraffes, lions, brown hyenas, and other desert-adapted animals. Equally isolated is Wilderness's **Serra Cafema Camp**, a luxurious river lodge on Namibia's northern boundary,

where crocodile safaris and visits with the seminomadic Himba people are highlights.

Namibia's roster of first-rate resorts grew last year with the opening of **Nambwa Tented Lodge** (nambwalodge.com), which features 10 treetop tent suites overlooking the Kwando River and floodplains in the Zambezi region. Also last year, the new lodge operator Namibia Exclusive debuted its first camp, the nine-room **Sorris Sorris Lodge** (namibia-exclusive.com) among the giant boulders near the Brandberg Massif.

Namibia Exclusive plans three more openings this year, in locations such as the headwaters of the Hoanib River just outside Etosha National Park and the isolated forests of Khaudum National Park. On the banks of the Zambezi River, **Chobe Water Villas** (chobewatervillas.com) also promises to make a splash this year when it opens with 16 stilted suites hovering above the Chobe River. —S.K.



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Los Angeles.



Above and right: The Broad museum, in downtown L.A.

LOS ANGELES HAS never taken kindly to its second-city status. From fashion and red carpets to sun-drenched beaches and theme parks, the West Coast megalopolis takes a backseat to none. And though L.A. may sometimes struggle to assert itself as a hub of high culture, recent developments in the city have solidified its place as one of the world capitals—if not *the* capital—of contemporary art.

L.A. demanded the art world's attention last September, when Eli and Edythe Broad's \$140 million contemporary-art museum debuted next door to Frank Gehry's shimmering Disney Concert Hall. **The Broad** (thebroad.org)—which joins such respected local institutions as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Getty, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles—highlights a burgeoning movement in the city. Last year, the New York-based galleries **Maccarone** (maccarone.net) and **Venus**

over Manhattan (venusovermanhattan.com) opened their first California outposts in downtown L.A. This year, big European names such as Switzerland's **Hauser & Wirth** (hauserwirth.com) and London's **Sprüth Magers** (spruethmagers.com) will also arrive in town.



THE BROAD HIGHLIGHTS A BURGEONING ART MOVEMENT IN THE CITY.

Santa Monica's **Bergamot Station** (bergamotstation.com), an 8-acre gallery and cultural complex set on the site of a historic rail yard. —J.C.



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No. 8

Douro Valley.



O ENOPHILES HAVE LONG revered Portugal's Douro Valley for more than just its ports. Their secret has gotten out in recent years, with estates such as **Chryseia** (chryseia.com)—whose Prats & Symington 2011 was a *Robb Report* Best of the Best winner in 2014—and **Quinta do Vale Meão** (quintadovalemeao.pt) gaining international acclaim for their world-class wines. Now the Douro Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where vineyards stretch from the Marão Mountains all the way to the border of Spain, is emerging as Europe's

next great wine destination. The region's first luxury resort, the **Six Senses Douro Valley** (sixsenses.com; see page 72), opened in July on a verdant hill overlooking the gently flowing Douro River. The area can also be explored from the river itself: **Viking Cruises** (vikingcruises.com) has doubled its offerings on the Douro in recent years, anchored by its Portugal's River of Gold itineraries. Set on one of three ships custom built to ply the Douro, the cruises visit four UNESCO World Heritage Sites and offer ample wine-tasting opportunities along the way. —C.R.

No. 9

Marrakech.

MOROCCO'S RED CITY is on fire. Beyond the bustling medina and its intimate *riads* and over-the-top hotels (the Royal Mansour and La Mamounia among them), Marrakech is spreading to the outlying desert on all sides. The Palmeraie neighborhood has been a hotbed of hotel development for years, with recent openings including the exclusive **Palais Namaskar** (palaisnamaskar.com) from the Oetker Collection and the elegant equestrian oasis **Selman Marrakech** ([selman-marrakech](http://selman-marrakech.com)

[.com](http://selman-marrakech.com)). In the city's southeastern outskirts, the **Mandarin Oriental, Marrakech** (mandarinoriental.com; see page 64), debuted in October amid olive groves and palm-lined golf courses. Also in the neighborhood, the 13-acre **Amanjena** (aman.com) reopened the same month after a three-month renovation by the British architect

Reda Amalou (who will also be designing more than a dozen 19,375-square-foot residences at the resort). Farther afield—about 13 sandy miles from the heart of the medina—the

THE PALMERAIE IS A HOTBED OF HOTEL DEVELOPMENT.

Grace Marrakech (gracehotels.com) will open this year just outside the mountain village of Tameslouht. —C.R.

Above: Six Senses Douro Valley.
Opposite: A guest pavilion at the recently renovated Amanjena.



No. 10

Los Cabos.

AS RECENTLY AS a year ago, Los Cabos was essentially closed for business. Battered by 2014's devastating Hurricane Odile, Baja California's beloved strip of coast seemed as though it might never return to form. But the Mexican resort area, which stretches from Cabo San Lucas in the south to San José del Cabo in the north, has come roaring back with a roster of sterling resorts both new and renewed. Longtime favorites such as **One&Only Palmilla** (oneandonlyresorts.com)—where a top-to-bottom renovation included the addition of a Jean-Georges Vongerichten steak house—have more than simply recovered. **The Resort at Pedregal** (theresortatpedregal.com) has reopened with a new cliffside Champagne terrace, and Rosewood's **Las Ventanas al**



THE MEXICAN
RESORT AREA
HAS COME
ROARING BACK.

Paraíso (rosewoodhotels.com) and Auberge Resorts' **Esperanza** (aubergeresorts.com) are better than ever after landmark renovations. New to the scene is the 299-room **JW Marriott Los Cabos Beach Resort & Spa** (jw.marriott.com), which debuted in November with 299 rooms and seven restaurants. An eatery from Mexico City's master chef Enrique Olvera highlights the **Cape, a Thompson Hotel** (thompsonhotels.com), which in June became the first new resort to open in the aftermath of Odile.

—RAPHAEL KADUSHIN

Right: The Resort at Pedregal. Below: A suite at the Mandarin Oriental, Bodrum.

No. 11

Bodrum.

THE TURKISH RIVIERA may be well established among the European crowd, but the Aegean Sea escape known for its sparkling coves and cypress-lined hillsides has stayed relatively obscure on the other side of the Atlantic. Word of the region began to spread in earnest among the American jet set in 2011, sparked by the opening of Amanresorts' **Amanruya** (aman.com) on the Bodrum Peninsula. Five years later, thanks in part to a growing roster of top-tier properties, Bodrum's buzz is palpable. The 2014 debut of the 148-acre **Mandarin Oriental, Bodrum** (mandarinoriental.com), was followed by last July's arrival of the sleek **Caresse, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa** (caresse.com.tr). This July, Americans' now-healthy appetite for the region should continue to grow when the Arizona-based Canyon Ranch brand debuts its **Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort at Kaplankaya** (canyonranch.com), featuring 141 Aegean-view guest rooms and a 107,500-square-foot spa. —FARHAD HEYDARI



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Paris.



Above: Jean Nouvel's striking Philharmonie de Paris in the Parc de la Villette.

PARIS'S APPEAL MUST be attributed, at least in part, to its history. The centuries-old landmarks, the grand boulevards, and the boulangeries and boutiques run for generations by the same families all make for a city of timeless elegance. This year, however, the City of Light—which has remained resilient in the face of recent terrorist attacks and an ongoing refugee crisis—will claim a new reputation as the city of the future.

Gustave Eiffel and Georges-Eugène Haussmann may have shaped the French capital centuries ago, but today Jean Nouvel, Shigeru Ban, and Thierry Despont are the architects of modern Parisian life. The king of cutting-edge architecture, Frank Gehry, set the city on its progressive new trajectory in 2014 with the unveiling of his glass-and-steel **Fondation Louis Vuitton** art museum (fondationlouisvuitton.fr) in the Bois de Boulogne. Last year, Nouvel followed suit with his **Philharmonie de Paris** (philharmoniedeparis.fr), an acoustic and

aesthetic marvel in the Parc de la Villette. More eye—and ear—candy is set to open this year with the October debut of the **Cité Musicale** (cite-musicale-ile-seguin.hauts-de-seine.net), Ban and Jean de Gastines's ambitious music complex crowned by a futuristic spherical auditorium on the Île de Seguin.

Old Paris's long-standing landmarks are also receiving a dose of modernism. In December, the **Louvre** (louvre.fr) debuted renovations of its reception hall beneath

THE CITY OF LIGHT IS THE CITY OF THE FUTURE.

I. M. Pei's famed pyramid, while the **Musée Rodin** (musee-rodin.fr) reemerged in November after a three-year restoration. Some of the city's grandes dames are making themselves over as well: The first to open in 2016 will be the **Ritz Paris** (ritzparis.com), which is slated for unveiling in February after a three-year renovation by Despont. —CASEY HATFIELD-CHIOTTI

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No. 13

Zanzibar.



Above: Per Aquum Zalu Zanzibar. Opposite, from top: Masseria Le Carrube; Irie Fields golf course at Kittitian Hill.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE to the British, foreigners have attempted to settle in Zanzibar for aeons. The universal attraction of the Indian Ocean archipelago is no mystery; in addition to being a strategic stop on ancient trade routes, Zanzibar is a perfect picture of palm-fringed beaches and impossibly blue waters. Not surprisingly, luxury hotel brands are now staking claims of their own, with a handful of new resorts adding to the Tanzanian islands' allure.

Park Hyatt chose Zanzibar's main island of Unguja for its first African property, opening the **Park Hyatt Zanzibar** (park.hyatt.com) in the historic city of Stone Town last March. The 67-room hotel, which occupies a

17th-century structure on the edge of a dhow-lined harbor, resembles a modern sultan's palace with colorful textiles and Zanzibari carved doors.

While the Park Hyatt offers a worthy cultural complement to Zanzibar's outlying resorts, the archipelago's beach retreats—from the east coast's new **White Sand Luxury Villas & Spa** (whitesandvillas.com) to the south's **Residence Zanzibar** (cenizaro.com)—are the main draw. The beach's newest resident will debut early this year with the completion of the first phase of the **Per Aquum Zalu Zanzibar** (peraquum.com), a 4-acre retreat with 49 suites and villas that is sure to encourage visitors to settle in for the long haul. —SANDRA RAMANI

No. 14

Puglia.

BEST KNOWN AS Italy's heel, the peninsular region of Puglia has always had the trappings—picturesque beaches, baroque towns, rolling vineyards—of a top tourist destination. With the recent arrival of a few elite-level hotels, the region appears to be finally getting its due. Last June, **La Fiermontina** (lafiermontina.com) opened in a historic palazzo in charming Lecce with 16 guest rooms, a swimming pool, and a sculpture garden. **Masseria Trapanà** (masonrose.com), located just outside of town in a restored 16th-century farmhouse, followed in October with six gardens, nine suites, and a bijoux chapel adorned with sixth-century frescoes. This March, the 19-room **Masseria Le Carrube** (masserialecarrubeostuni.it)—a sprawling chalk-white manse on the outskirts of Ostuni—will bring further proof that the spotlight is shifting to Puglia. Not to be left behind is the property that started it all: **Borgo Egnazia** (borgoegnazia.com), a 49-acre resort that itself resembles a Puglian town, recently debuted the region's most over-the-top accommodation, the seven-bedroom Villa Padronale. —R.K.



No. 15

St. Kitts

ONLY IN THE past decade has tourism overtaken sugarcane production as St. Kitts's biggest industry. Still relatively unsung compared with much of the Caribbean, the lush West Indies isle is seeing careful development that promises to attract discerning travelers. The \$600 million community **Kittitian Hill** (kittitianhill.com), which debuted in late 2014, currently includes a hotel, an organic farm, 76 vacation homes, and an "edible" golf course called Irie Fields. On the southern end of the island, the 2,500-acre **Christophe Harbour** (christopheharbour.com) opened its superyacht marina last February and is expanding to include 300 berths, a Tom Fazio–designed golf course, and the forthcoming 125-room **Park Hyatt St. Kitts** (park.hyatt.com). Welcoming all of the island's VIP visitors is the RLB International Airport's new Yu Lounge, a private terminal offering expedited customs clearance and Porsche Cayenne transfers. —ELAINE GLUSAC

THE LUSH WEST INDIES ISLE IS SEEING CAREFUL DEVELOPMENT.



Charleston.



A deluxe king room at the Spectator Hotel.

IN SOUTH CAROLINA'S oldest city, church steeples are the skyline's tallest structures, and development takes a backseat to preservation. So it makes sense that Charleston's new and newly updated hotels fit in with, rather than stand apart from, the Holy City's landmarks. In November, the 30-year-old **Belmond Charleston Place** (belmond.com)—something of a landmark in its own right, with its stately brick facade in historic downtown—completed renovations of its 434 guest rooms, replacing staid yellow interiors with fresh white walls and Carrara-marble floors. Nearby, the new **Spectator Hotel** (thespectatorhotel.com) and the recently revamped **Restoration on King** (restorationonking.com) mirror the period architecture of their neighbors while offering a host of modern amenities inside.

The 155-room **Dewberry** (thedewberrycharleston.com), debuting this spring, will occupy a restored midcentury structure overlooking Marion Square.

Visitors will also find new entertainment in old Charleston. The \$143.5 million **Charleston Gaillard Center**

(gaillardcenter.com) opened in October as the Charleston Symphony Orchestra's new 1,800-seat home. This May, the **Gibbes Museum of Art** (gibbesmuseum.org)—which is set within Meeting Street's

beloved Beaux Arts building—will reopen with restored galleries for its collection of more than 10,000 works of art. —JENNIFER ASHTON RYAN

IN CHARLESTON, DEVELOPMENT TAKES A BACK SEAT TO PRESERVATION.



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No. 17

Fiji.



FIJI DOES NOT leave much room for improvement. But even a paradise of turquoise lagoons, lush rain forests, and private-island retreats needs periodic refreshing, and this year the South Pacific nation is in peak form thanks to a recent wave of activity. In 2014, Auberge Resorts added **Nanuku** (aubergeresorts.com), an 18-villa hideaway on the country's main island of Viti Levu, to its portfolio of boutique properties. Northwest of Viti Levu, in the Mamanuca Islands, **Vomo Island Resort** (vomofiji.com) reemerged last March with renovated villas and a revamped restaurant. Off the coast of sizable Taveuni, the exclusive **Laukala Island** (laukala.com) recently added a DeepFlight Super Falcon submersible for resort guests to explore their underwater surroundings. But perhaps the most eye-opening news out of the archipelago comes from the volcanic northern Lau Islands, where James Jannard, founder of Oakley, has debuted **Vatuvara Private Islands** (vatuvara.com.fj), a retreat with just three expansive villas and two restaurants spread over 800 pristine acres of jungle and beach. —JILL K. ROBINSON

No. 18

Oman.



THE RUGGED EASTERN neighbor of the glitzy United Arab Emirates, Oman has typically been a place to escape luxury, not find it. Elite new retreats are helping push the peaceful (and politically stable) country to the forefront in the region, though never at the expense of its natural appeal. In the southern province of Dhofar, the recently opened Salalah International Airport eases access to the forthcoming **Al Baleed Salalah Resort by Anantara** (anantara.com),

a lagoon-lapped property that will debut in August with spacious pool villas and a private beach. Farther north, in the windswept Jebel Akhdar (Green Mountain) region, another Anantara outpost is in the offing. **Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort**—which comes on the heels of the 2014 debut of **Alila Jabal Akhdar** (alilahotels.com), the area's first luxury property—will open atop a sky-high perch in the Saiq Plateau in April.

—ADAM H. GRAHAM

Top: Nanuku, an Auberge Resort.
Above: Alila Jabal Akhdar.

TOP: CHRIS MCLENNAN



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Bogotá.



THE COLOMBIAN capital of Bogotá may be catching up to the country's more popular tourist destinations of Cartagena and Medellín. The centuries-old city nestled on a plateau in the Andes Mountains soon will boast not one but two Four Seasons hotels. The first of these high-altitude havens, the **Four Seasons Hotel Casa Medina Bogotá** (fourseasons.com; shown at left), opened in October within a historic 1940s

THE CENTURIES-OLD CITY SOON WILL BOAST TWO FOUR SEASONS HOTELS.

residence in Zona G—so called for its *gastronomía* scene. Entertainment is the theme in the district known as Zona T, where the **Four Seasons Hotel Bogotá** will make its debut early this year with a five-treatment-room spa and two restaurants. New restaurants throughout the city are bringing fresh attention to Colombian cuisine, including the Spanish chef Ramón Freixa's **From** (restaurantefrom.com). Not to be outdone are familiar favorites, including the eponymous eatery of the local celebrity chef **Harry Sasson** (harrysasson.com).

—EILEEN SMITH



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Above:
Montenegro's Bay
of Kotor. Below:
Six Senses Qing
Cheng Mountain.



No. 20

Montenegro.

MONACO MAY NOT be what it used to be—but Montenegro is. The Balkan nation, once part of Yugoslavia, is fast becoming the preferred destination for superyachts. Last year, **Porto Montenegro** (portomontenegro.com)—the Adriatic Sea marina and village that has been fueling Montenegro's momentum since 2009—unveiled a new yacht club, opened 48 new residences, expanded its marina by 200 berths, and hosted its first Superyacht Rendezvous (an annual event previously held in Monaco for a quarter century). The development is also home to the **Regent Porto Montenegro** hotel (regenthotels.com), which recently released its new Pool Club Residences for sale (priced from \$450,000).

MONTENEGRO IS FAST BECOMING THE PREFERRED DESTINATION FOR SUPERYACHTS.

Across the Bay of Kotor, the new 1,700-acre vacation-home community **Luštica Bay** (lusicabay.com) presents another option for those looking to stay awhile in Montenegro. For travelers just passing through, the country's premier resort remains **Aman Sveti Stefan** (aman.com), where high-profile superyachts have been known to anchor just offshore. —J.C.

No. 21

Chengdu.

CHENGDU HAS MASTERED the good life. The Sichuan capital is among China's most cosmopolitan cities, rich in cuisine, fashion, technology—and now luxury hotels. Initiating a wave of new accommodations was the 2014 opening of the **St. Regis Chengdu** (stregis.com), which features 279 rooms that blend art deco and Sichuan design. In 2015, the modern-meets-traditional aesthetic became a full-blown trend with the unveilings of the **Temple House** (thetemplehousehotel.com) from Swire Hotels—the brand behind Hong Kong's fashionable Upper House hotel—and the **Six Senses Qing Cheng Mountain** (sixsenses.com), located outside the city in the mountainous heart of China's giant-panda country. The good life promises to get even better this year, with imminent debuts from Mandarin Oriental, Waldorf Astoria, and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. —S.R. 

TOP: JACKIE CARADONIO

R Of Note

From David Arnold,

Senior Vice President/Group Publisher
of Robb Report

FERRAGAMO AND THE LUNGARNO COLLECTION

ferragamo.com | lungarnocollection.com

In September, Robb Report Club members were given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with fashion label Ferragamo and its Lungarno Collection hotels. The group was in the midst of a nine-day road rally from Milan to Rome when they paused in Florence for an ultimate experience hosted by one of Italy's most respected brands.

For more than 100 years, the Ferragamo name has been associated with the highest standards of creativity and craftsmanship. In 1915, young shoemaker Salvatore Ferragamo left Italy for the United States. His U.S. clients became the most famous motion picture performers of the day and fueled his new international reputation that followed him when he returned home in 1937. Ferragamo settled in Florence, founding a prestigious guild of leather artisans who still today contribute to the company's reputation for producing the finest leather goods.

The Ferragamo family's long-standing reputation in Florence can open doors and unlock experiences not available to the general public. Visitors can arrange the ultimate Florentine

experience, including private tours of the family's stately Palazzo Spini Feroni, dating to 1289 and now the home of its headquarters; private tours of its Museo Salvatore Ferragamo shoe museum; and private Ferragamo shopping experiences. Among Lungarno's six options for accommodations in Florence are the Lungarno Hotel, a 63-room jewel on the Arno River; four luxury apartments; a lavish six-bedroom villa; and the newly renovated Portrait Firenze. The latter, just 36 rooms overlooking the Ponte Vecchio, received a complete overhaul in 2014 and features an amazing five-bedroom Portrait Penthouse Floor with a hydromassage whirlpool on its sprawling terrace.

To book, please contact Cristina Fogliatto at c.fogliatto@lungarnocollection.com.

Salvatore Ferragamo





Bombs Away

ON THE POWDERY SLOPES OF PORTILLO, THE OLYMPIAN BODE MILLER AND NEW PARTNER BOMBER SKI HURTLE FORWARD ON THEIR QUEST TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE WORLD OF SKIING. **BY TIM NEVILLE**



IT IS LATE WINTER IN SOUTH AMERICA, and the ski slopes of Portillo, Chile, are gasping under 40 inches of new snow. For the past three days, a furious storm has ignited avalanches, closing the only road in and out and shuttering the ski area almost entirely. Today, however, could not be more beautiful. Toothy Andean peaks tear into a sky so blue that space itself seems but a spit-polish away. The air is crisp, the wind relaxed. The sun is a brilliant coin flipped out of the east.

These are the conditions that skiers dream about, but Bode Miller—an Olympic gold medalist and arguably the best alpine skier of all time—has not made a single run.



Bode Miller (above and previous spread) is the face of—and the brains behind—Bomber Ski's soon-to-launch line.

Instead, he has spent the morning on a frozen bench carved into the mountainside, sipping flutes of Dom Pérignon. At his side sits a 20-year-old Chilean model with perfect cheekbones, who helicoptered in from Santiago just a few hours ago. Surrounding the pair are filmmakers, photographers, a makeup artist, and a Hollywood producer/advertising executive. “And action!” a director shouts.

Everyone has journeyed here to film a James Bond-inspired promotional video for the U.S. manufacturer Bomber Ski. The company, an official supplier of the U.S. and Canadian ski teams, first came on the scene in 2010, but its founder declared bankruptcy two years later.

In 2013, the New York real estate tycoon Robert Siegel, along with his partners, snatched Bomber up at auction on the bet that they could do what no one else had successfully done before: convince consumers that well-designed, high-performing skis can be luxury items worth coveting. He enlisted Miller—the country’s most decorated skier—to be the brains behind the company’s new ski designs.

“No one will pay 10 cents to get kicked in the nuts, but they will pay a lot for exceptional experiences,” Miller told me later. “No other company has complete control over all of the pieces behind making skis, from top to bottom, all the way through, that can improve your skiing experience in the way that we can.”

With the Champagne scene in the bag, everyone clicks





Bomber Ski's current collection includes artful designs that feature reproductions of works by Jean-Michel Basquiat (left) and Keith Haring (far right and previous spread).

into skis to move to the next location. The model, however, cannot ski, so Miller—who is Hollywood handsome at 6 feet 2 inches tall and 220 pounds of muscle—offers to ski down with her on his back. She leaps onto him like a long-limbed kitten and hoots for joy as the two push off down the slope.

Suddenly, inexplicably, Miller loses his balance and pitches violently over the tips of his skis. His passenger goes catapulting as Miller belly flops into the fluff. When he stands up, his aviator sunglasses are sideways and caked with snow. In fact, he looks like he has just taken a pie in the face. “I can’t be a ninja all the time,” he shrugs, dusting himself off.

If you are going to test new ideas and make some

“NO OTHER COMPANY HAS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER ALL OF THE PIECES BEHIND MAKING SKIS, FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, ALL THE WAY THROUGH.”

—BODE MILLER

mistakes, Portillo is an ideal place to do it. Located high on one of the few navigable passes between Chile and Argentina, in an acute V-shaped valley about 100 miles north of Santiago, the ski area offers plenty of powder during the months when North American resorts are fuzzy with wildflowers. The who’s who of alpine racing and big-mountain skiing arrive in droves during the Chilean winter to train, stage photo shoots, and make movies. To be here is to mingle with the sport’s biggest stars. Erik Guay, the Canadian Olympic downhiller, might join you on the lift. Mikaela Shiffrin, the reigning world champion in slalom, might pass you as she races down Las Lomas. And Chris Davenport, one of the planet’s best ski mountaineers, might high-five you in the lodge after a day among the frightful peaks of Los Tres Hermanos.



Portillo's sole lodge, built in 1949, houses a who's who of alpine racing during the South American winter.

Portillo, however, is more Alta than Aspen, featuring steep, unruly slopes, unique surface lifts that slingshot skiers five at a time, and only a single hotel in its modest base village. After a day on the mountain, skiers retire to the Portillo Hotel—a yellow concrete hulk constructed by the Chilean government in 1949—to read by the fire or play dominoes in the old-school lounge lined with leather-paneled walls. The property also has a cinema and a spa, both of which add to the cruise-ship atmosphere—one where

everyone is swaddled in Gore-Tex.

“The thing I love about this place is that if you go to Vail, you have dozens of hotels and restaurants and you might see somebody once and that’s it,” says Siegel, who first came to Portillo in the 1970s for a ski training camp. “Here you’re guaranteed to reconnect with people because there is only one place for everyone to go.”

In addition to promotional videos, Siegel and Miller have come to Portillo so the skier can experiment with the company’s current line of skis—and

determine exactly what he wants to do to change them. One ski, a powder model, comes with a rounded tail that Miller wants to change right away. “I’d square it off for better control,” he tells Siegel.

“But people don’t want that,” Siegel counters. “They’ll say, ‘How can you possibly make a powder ski with a square tail? It’ll stick in the turns!’”

“That’s where you need me,” Miller replies. “I could come in and say, ‘Calm down, sir. The feeling of getting stuck in a turn has nothing to do with the shape of the tail but with the flex.’”

Siegel likes what he hears.

“Trust me,” Miller says.

The Bomber skis Miller is testing are not custom skis but rather boutique models handmade in small batches at Siegel’s Italian Alps factory. Unlike larger companies, which Miller says sacrifice performance for the bottom line, Bomber does not cut corners in the development of its skis, which start at about \$1,600 per pair and can go up to \$10,000 or more for versions decorated with reproductions of artworks by artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring.

When the new Miller-designed line debuts this winter, the company’s partners believe it will bring an unprecedented combination of form and function to the sport. “Think of it like a car,” Miller says. “You’re not going to put inner tubes on your Porsche instead of tires. You want tires for tires, suspension for suspension, steering for steering. It’s the same with skis. Even beginners—especially beginners—benefit from having skis that perform the way skis are supposed to perform.”

It is hard to believe Miller himself was ever a beginner. At 6 years old, he walked the 5 miles from his home, which had no running water, to the slopes of Cannon Mountain in New Hampshire. He survived his first avalanche at age 12, and by the time he was a senior in high school he was sponsored by the U.S. ski company K2. While with K2, Miller



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Bode Miller tests Bomber's Tribal Warrior Haring skis on the slopes of Portillo.

convinced the brand to develop a ski with a parabolic sidecut, which allowed it to carve through a turn in the same way that a bent playing card can carve through carpet. The revolutionary K2 Four was an overnight sensation, and the term *shaped skis* echoed through the lift lines.

Siegel is no stranger to the snow, either. Raised on Long Island, he has considered skiing a part of his life—if not his business—for decades. “I’ve always loved the sport, the adrenaline, the balance between absolute control and absolute freedom,” he says. “But as an investment, skis are horrible. The industry has trained the consumer to think of skis as a cheap, interchangeable commodity.” Siegel’s disillusionment with the ski business soon became the impetus for his decision to change it. “Why

can’t you take something mundane and make it beautiful?” he says. “All the reasons that I didn’t want to make skis became all the reasons I wanted to make skis.”

“THINK OF IT LIKE A CAR. YOU’RE NOT GOING TO PUT INNER TUBES ON YOUR PORSCHE INSTEAD OF TIRES. . . IT’S THE SAME WITH SKIS.”

—BODE MILLER

His quest to craft the perfect ski struck a chord with Miller. In June, the athlete was impressed enough with Siegel’s plans that he ended his contract with the sports equipment

company Head to take a formal stake in Bomber. The collaboration offers him not only a creative outlet but also a long-term exit strategy from competitive skiing: In October, Miller announced that he would not race on the World Cup circuit this season, and he has few hopes of competing in the 2018 Olympics in South Korea. “I know I’m going to live really long,” he says, “and no one is going to care that I was a ski racer when I’m 100.”

For now, at 38 years old, upright and with most of the snow wiped from his face, Miller lets his manager escort the model to safety. He takes off again, this time setting a fine pair of tracks that scribe their way into a smooth future. **R**

Bomber Ski, bomerski.com



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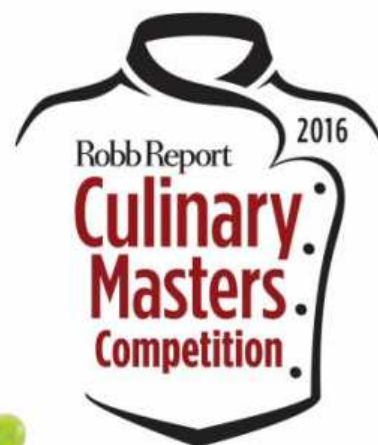
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Robb Report's New Culinary Master for 2016

In a competition of rising stars across regions of the United States, the Midwest's **Lee Wolen** takes home the title.

Lee Wolen much prefers the heat of the kitchen to a dining room filled with strangers. So when the chef and partner at Boka in Chicago stepped before a crowd of 54 hungry judges at the fourth annual *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition, he was clearly nervous.

The first course in his competition dinner was being placed before them: a plate of roasted fermented broccoli arranged over dabs of thick Greek yogurt, smoked pork loin, and Parmesan crisps. More than one judge noted that a dish made with such humble ingredients was a “brave” move, yet one bite, and it was clear why Wolen had chosen it: His preparation was a brilliant twist on the Caesar salad. Asked to explain the inspiration,

however, Wolen could only reply, “I chose yogurt because yogurt is good with everything,” and then he rushed back to the kitchen.

The Midwestern chef's nerves were understandable. He was one of six rising stars competing for the top honor of New Culinary Master for 2016. Every year, *Robb Report* assembles a panel of acclaimed master chefs and challenges them to single out a promising newcomer, but this year, the competition has an American regional theme. The six master chefs—John Besh representing the South; Curtis Duffy, the Midwest; Christopher Kostow, the West Coast; Barbara Lynch, New England; Norman Van Aken, the Southeast; and Michael White, New York—each nominated a chef doing the best work in their regional style.

Among this year's competitors, each of whom cooked a five-course competition dinner last summer or fall, Wolen brought a particularly strong résumé. After early stints in Chicago's Moto and the now-closed Butter, the Cleveland native spent nearly a year in Spain with the master of molecular gastronomy, Ferran Adrià, and three years as Daniel Humm's sous chef at the Michelin three-star Eleven Madison Park in New York City. Wolen returned to the Midwest and his culinary roots in 2012 when he joined the Lobby at the Peninsula Chicago as chef de cuisine. After moving on to Boka in 2014, he quickly earned a Michelin star of his own, as well as the title of the *Chicago Tribune's* 2014 Chef of the Year.

During his time at the Peninsula, Wolen had crossed paths with Duffy, a luminary on the city's dining scene. Duffy worked his way through Chicago's top restaurants—Charlie Trotter's, Trio, Alinea, the Avenues—and in 2012 opened his own restaurant, Grace, which is the only Chicago restaurant other than Alinea to hold three Michelin stars. Though Wolen and Duffy have never worked together, they became fast friends and admirers of each other's work, and when Duffy was asked for a Culinary Masters nominee, he did not hesitate. "I thought of Lee immediately," he said, addressing the judges at Wolen's competition dinner at Michael's in New York City. "This is a man that has the kind of caliber and high standards that make a great chef. I knew he would do the Midwest proud."

Wolen's cuisine has been called approachable, simple, and even defiant. Yet complex techniques often belie the simplicity. Consider such Boka dishes as salt-cod ravioli, made by slow-cooking house-cured fish in garlicky milk and cream, or octopus that is cooked for 18 hours and served with burnt orange puree, sweet-and-sour braised pork, and pork-and-ginger broth.

Back in the kitchen at Michael's, Wolen was plating the evening's second course: Maine lobster with matsutake mushrooms, fall radishes, and pickled hijiki. Here the chef was at ease, despite having spent the early hours of the day prepping in a "closet-sized" kitchen across 55th Street. (Michael's had Friday lunch to serve.) Wolen had arrived in New York two days before with dozens of containers brimming with Illinois's finest seasonal ingredients. "It's a huge challenge to take what you do on the road like this," he said. "It all comes down to preparation."

The effort, however, was paying off. Course after course, the Culinary Masters judges were dazzled. For his third dish, Wolen chose a personal favorite: squab, smoked whole on the bone for 6 minutes, served with charred chestnuts braised in chicken jus and pickled pears, and drizzled with a savory cardamom sauce. But the fourth course triggered a wave of praise across the dining room:



"Great meal! Simple but expected, as is all of his food."

—MASTER CHEF CURTIS DUFFY



Wolen (top, at left with Duffy) filled eggshells with smoked trout roe for his dinner at Michael's in New York. Opposite page: Intensity on the line.

a 55-day dry-aged rib-eye cap and tender slow-roasted steak showered with shaved white truffles and perfectly paired with M. Chapoutier 2007 Hermitage Monier de la Sizeranne. "I could float out the door," said Carl C. Hoyler as he gazed at his empty plate. "The only problem is that I wanted more."

By dessert, it was clear that Wolen would be the chef to beat in this year's competition. And his duo of hazelnut and coffee mousses with vanilla ice cream—made

"Toasted milk—who knew it was so amazing?!"

—GIOVANNI BATTAGLIA ON THE DESSERT COURSE

The Winning Meal



Roasted Broccoli

Yogurt, Parmesan, smoked ham



Maine Lobster

Matsutake, fall radish, hijiki



Smoked Squab

Confit leg, chestnut, pear, cardamom



55-Day Dry-Aged Rib Eye

Sunchoke, water cress, white truffle

TOP-SCORING DISH



Hazelnut, Coffee, Toasted Milk

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from ultrarich milk from Illinois's Kilgus Farmstead and topped with a golden sheet of toasted milk—only reinforced this conclusion: The dessert garnered the highest scores of the night.

As the evening concluded, the man of the hour emerged one more time from the kitchen to a roomful of applause. When the ovation ceased, Wolen was asked one final question: Looking back, was there anything he would change about his menu? And to that, the winner of the 2016 Culinary Masters Competition replied, "No."

—JACKIE CARADONIO

CURTIS DUFFY: The first time I met Lee, I was on my lunch break at Alinea. I was sitting outside on a corner, and this sort of scruffy guy who looked a little bit like a homeless person walked over to me and said, "Hey, I'm Lee. I'm one of the sous chefs over at Butter." I knew his name from a few restaurants around Chicago, and I knew he was doing great things. Our friendship was almost immediate.

LEE WOLEN: We knew of each other from the Peninsula Chicago. Curtis was the chef at Avenue, and I took over the hotel's three-meal-a-day restaurant after he left.

CD: We never really worked together in a kitchen side by side. But in this city, you know where everybody's next step is and where they are going in their career. You were very easy to follow.

LW: Yeah, it is a pretty tight-knit community in Chicago with all the chefs.

CD: I never had the opportunity to eat your food at the Peninsula, but I did once you took over at Boka. I think one of the greatest—and hardest—things you can do is bring simplicity to the plate: When you bring simplicity to the plate, there is nothing to hide behind. The way that you cook and the style that you cook are very thoughtful but also very simple at the same time. It is about the ingredients and letting them speak for themselves, as well as finding the best ingredients you can possibly get your hands on.

LW: We like to have pretty plates. We are not extremists on the plates, but we have classic flavors and simple, seasonal ingredients. But also we like to have a little bit of a twist and make it a little, I guess, New Age. We may have beef and cauliflower, but it will be cooked just a little bit different than the ordinary.

CD: Something that I connect with in your food, and



Above, clockwise from top: King crab with caviar; smoked beef tongue; hamachi crudo, and foie gras with fig.



something that I see in myself as well, is that it is very important to give the guests something that's familiar. But we also want to give them something that's unique. Maybe it is a different cooking technique or maybe a different flavor pairing that somebody hasn't ever had before. Or maybe it's a rare ingredient but done in such a simple way that it doesn't feel too exotic. People are still able to understand the dish and connect with the dish, because there is something on that dish that they are very familiar with.

LW: We have squab sometimes on our tasting menu at

Boka—I don't think you see squab every day. For the squab we served at the competition, I wanted it to be a comforting dish with classic fall flavors. We weren't looking to reinvent the wheel with the flavor components, but what was important was creating a balanced, fairly light, and still earthy and flavorful dish.

CD: Squab is actually one of my favorite birds to eat. What I like about your squab is that you roast them whole, so they are still on the bone. To get a pretty heavy smoke on a squab, you usually have to take it off the bone because you want to expose as much as you can to the smoke. The smoke element on that dish is pretty intense.

LW: I respect your food for the same reasons. I ate at Grace a while ago, and you had what was essentially a beet-and-apple salad, but it was so far from the normal beet-and-apple salad that every other restaurant does. Apple milk added a really mind-blowing element and a whole different concept, but it was still a beet-and-apple salad, so people got it.

CD: You are going to continue to make noise in the city and internationally. I couldn't think of anybody else in the city I would want to represent the Midwest and Chicago.

WATCH THE VIDEO



Off the Menu

See Lee Wolen, *Robb Report's* New Culinary Master for 2016, prepare roasted broccoli with yogurt, Parmesan, and smoked ham, a dish from his competition menu, at robbreport.com/wolen.

From Control to Cure

LAST YEAR, NEARLY 600,000 people across the United States died from some form of cancer—a number that represents almost one out of every four deaths in the country. This year, more than 1.6 million Americans will learn that they have the disease.

The figures alone are enough to incite action. For Curtis Duffy, however, the cause is personal. “I have a few friends with cancer, and my ex-wife has cancer,” he says. “It’s an ongoing battle that the entire world has to face every single day.”



For that reason, Duffy chose the American Cancer Society—both the leading organization dedicated to eliminating cancer and the oldest—as his beneficiary for the *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition. Established in

New York City in 1913 by a group of physicians, the organization—then called the American Society for the Control of Cancer—spawned an unprecedented movement, drawing attention to and demanding research into a disease that

was at the time enshrouded in fear and denial. Today, the American Cancer Society operates more than 350 offices throughout the U.S. It has invested \$4.3 billion in research since 1946, more than any other private nonprofit group in the country.

But the fight against cancer is far from over. And to Duffy, every penny that can be devoted to the cause is well spent. “The more money we can give toward coming up with a cure, the better,” he says.

—J.C.

Back to the Bayou

For **John Besh**, the rich legacy of New Orleans cuisine is at home in the talented hands of **Justin Devillier**.



"Each bite was better than the next."
—JODY ROSENTHAL



For his dinner at the Beverly Wilshire hotel, Devillier topped crabmeat beignets with caviar, a Besh favorite. Opposite, top: panéed Gulf oysters.

Merle Haggard tunes were pouring out of the radio and sticks of fragrant, funky andouille—smoked just days before in LaPlace, La.—were in need of chopping. Justin Devillier picked up his knife, a burl-handled beauty made by the South Carolina bladesmith Quintin Middleton, and got to work. Beverly Hills traffic may have been purring just beyond the kitchen doors, but Devillier was steeped in the South as he prepared his *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition dinner at the Beverly Wilshire hotel.

Devillier, chef and owner of the restaurants La Petite Grocery and Balise in New Orleans, was nominated as the region's best up-and-coming chef by none other than John Besh, a New Orleans native and the de facto ambassador for the city and its cuisine. "Justin pays a lot of respect to our heritage, but at the same time, his cooking is lighter, fresher, bolder," said Besh, who dines at Balise at least twice a month. "And he has a very clever way with the local ingredients."

This compliment is all the more impressive in light of the fact that Devillier grew up on the beaches of Southern California. But his family has Louisiana roots going back to the 1700s, and summers spent with relatives in Opelousas were his first experiences with serious cooks. "A big part of enjoying life meant eating delicious food," he

recalled. “Free time was spent cooking—lots of rice and grits and smothered pork chops. They hunted wild game—rabbit, duck, deer. Shrimp too, of course, and catfish. And there was a lot of smoked food, especially in the summer.”

So many of these elements now figure in Devillier’s own cooking, but with the polish and creativity that come from working in top New Orleans restaurants since 2003 and taking over the stoves at La Petite Grocery in 2007. Devillier’s competition dinner included many of the dishes that have earned him glowing reviews and James Beard Foundation nominations, such as fluffy beignets stuffed with crabmeat; an elegant salad of chilled Gulf shrimp with lemon, tarragon, and hearts of palm; tender *mezzelune* filled with uni and lavished with that exquisitely smoky andouille, sweet corn, and truffles; and roasted Mississippi rabbit with country ham, grilled cabbage, and green-tomato jam.

“He’s made New Orleans his home in the worst of times,” Besh said, referring to Devillier’s decision to stay and help rebuild the city after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. “He took over a beautiful restaurant, an existing restaurant, but he just took it to a new level.” For Besh, this commitment puts Devillier in the company of seasoned chefs who have continually reinvented the city’s French Creole and Cajun cooking—including Paul Prudhomme, Emeril Lagasse, Susan Spicer, and Besh himself—as well as a handful of his talented contemporaries, such as Scott Boswell and Donald Link. “This is the beautiful thing about working in such a great tradition,” Besh said. “That song is being passed from generation to generation, and you know that the next generation is going to do a pretty good job with it.” —MICHAELNE BUSICO

JOHN BESH: I want to talk about those crabmeat beignets. Mind-blowing. This is something that we both grew up with. We have a lot of fritters in our culture—we love puffy little fried nuggets of goodness. These were stuffed with crab and pillow and light and airy, and right on top there was a little chouquette roe. Or paddlefish roe?

JUSTIN DEVILLIER: It was American sturgeon—Georgia sturgeon.

JB: OK, so American sturgeon, right on top of that. Salty, briny caviar meets crisp, fluffy, airy-light fritter. And the perfume—so sweet with crabmeat. That was just the perfect way to start off a meal.

JD: It’s such a better experience to have one little bite of those while you’re getting ready for dinner and sipping cocktails than it is to have a bowl of them in front of you.

JB: I don’t know, I’ll take a bowl.

JD: People ask for bowls of them all the time. I think it’s nicer to eat with a cocktail, like the other hors d’oeuvres—say, the duck tasso with Vietnamese pickled vegetables and a fish-sauce condiment, nuoc cham. I like to combine Louisiana-style ham with the Vietnamese flavors that are so prevalent in New Orleans today and pay homage to both cultures colliding.

JB: That’s right up my alley. Again, these are flavors that really scream *home* to us. That’s exactly why these two little bites exemplify why I wanted you to represent the region. You’re taking these flavors that are so comfortable and traditional for us, and you’re showcasing them in a new way that’s fun, whimsical, and not too precious. I love that you have the flavors of a banh mi and a tasso and this spicy duck all wrapped together.



JD: The last hors d’oeuvre was the panéed Gulf oyster. Usually in the classic New Orleans restaurants, you’ll see panéed veal or that type of thing, breaded and pan-fried in butter like little cutlets. I downsized it to one bite using an oyster—a really nice little crispy oyster—with a little spicy quail-egg salad and some bright, fresh brininess from gulf bottarga.

JB: Another great use of what we have locally, prepared in a manner that is whimsical and fun. The perfect little bite of the Gulf Coast.

Top Dish: Grilled-Fig-Leaf Panna Cotta



THE FINAL COURSE on Justin Devillier’s competition menu—a gossamer panna cotta infused with the floral notes of grilled fig leaves—drew the highest scores from *Robb Report* judges. Devillier served it embellished with only a tiny

scoop of intense, jammy huckleberry sorbet and a scattering of salty sweet toasted hazelnut praline. Who would have guessed his sophisticated finale was inspired by the simple pleasures of peanut butter and jelly? —M.B.

**“Superb!
late two!”**
—FRANK WATANABE

JD: I consider the entire gulf our locale, and I like to support the fishermen. It's our water, and we try to keep it rich and clean and support it by using things like the Florida bottarga [made by Bemis & James], which comes out of the central Florida Gulf Coast. You had guys there who were fishing mullet and selling all the roe to Italians. Then they figured out what was going on: The Italians were curing it and selling it for \$90 a pound. These fishermen in Florida, a lightbulb goes off in their head—

JB: “Hey wait a minute, we can do this,” right?

JD: The mullet roe was going to Italy, getting cured and getting sent back to chefs in New York and Chicago and L.A. and New Orleans and all over. They decided to do it locally, and now they've nailed it. Their bottarga is soft, luscious, crumbly, bright orange—a little bit fresher in

texture than the Italian stuff but equally as pungent and briny.

JB: It really exemplifies modern American cooking. It's not about who can produce the most precious food; it's about understanding that how we purchase and what we



Devillier's third course featured Mississippi rabbit wrapped in a grilled cabbage leaf with country ham and green-tomato jam.

purchase and how we prepare it does have an impact on those around us. That's where Justin, again, is leading the charge. He's chosen a place, and he speaks to it, he cooks of it, he honors it—but at the same time, he's helping to sustain that beautiful culture.

I think New Orleans is not only the soul of the South but the culinary soul of our country. Before the storm, we took that for granted.

Now we take nothing for granted. We realize every day's a gift. Likewise, when we're cooking, I see us cooking with our whole heart—as a city, I see it. I see better po'boys today than we had 10 years ago, believe it or not. I think we're much more passionate about the culture, which is good, because the young chefs coming up will sustain our culture. But I also think we've done a great job of maintaining our old standards—just within six or eight blocks of my restaurant August, we have at least half a dozen restaurants over 100 years old. Tell me in what other city you will find that. It's crazy to see the depth of richness we have in these old standouts, and it's awesome to see young chefs like Justin rising up and doing great things with the very same ingredients.

WATCH THE VIDEO



Off the Menu

See Justin Devillier make chilled Gulf shrimp with lemon, tarragon, and hearts of palm—a dish from his Culinary Masters Competition dinner—at robbreport.com/devillier.

A Community of Cooks

REBUILDING AND PRESERVING New Orleans's culinary heritage has been a mission for John Besh since the early days after Hurricane Katrina, and he is quick to note the recovery's successes. “We have nearly 50 percent more restaurants than we had prior to Hurricane Katrina, if you can believe that, with a smaller population,” he says. “Truly, our hospitality industry is more responsible for bringing New Orleans back than just about anything.”

Yet Besh also sees that many of those in the inner city are not making the same strong comeback. He and a

friend, the food blogger Jessica Bride, spent several years studying the problem, and in 2011 he established the John Besh Foundation, which he chose as his beneficiary for the *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition. The nonprofit group mentors young culinary talent in New Orleans and provides microloans to farmers and artisanal food producers within 200 miles of the city.

Its scholarship program, cofounded with Bride, is called Chefs Move! It is open to minority applicants from New Orleans and provides full tuition to the International



Culinary Center in New York City, including supplies and housing, as well as a paid internship in a top New York kitchen, such as Gramercy Tavern. Afterward, the students are required to return to New Orleans, where they work for Besh for six months and then move on to another elite kitchen in the city for at least two years. “I set them up with

somebody who can be a mentor to them,” Besh says. “Susan Spicer and Emeril Lagasse and the Brennans have stepped up. And I would like to call upon Justin too, to see if he will take in one of our returning students. If we're going to truly sustain this beautiful culture, people of every race, color, and creed have to participate in it.” —M.B.




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Revolutionary Style

Barbara Lynch salutes Patrick Campbell's refreshing way with the bounty of New England and the tenets of fine dining.

"No doubt one of the best culinary experiences I've ever had!"
—MELANIE KEENAN



"I could eat Patrick's food every night," Lynch said after Campbell's dinner at the St. Regis New York.



Barbara Lynch—a largely self-taught cook from the South Boston projects who went on to become the city's doyenne of fine dining—stepped to the podium at the St. Regis New York. She clearly savored the moment, but the focus of the evening was on a chef other than herself: her *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition nominee for the best rising culinary talent in New England, Patrick Campbell. "From the day he walked in looking for a job, he was brimming with passion for great food," Lynch said, and with that, Campbell emerged from the kitchen, clad in his signature checkered apron. Their mutual admiration was apparent.

Campbell, the inventive chef at Café ArtScience in Cambridge, credits Lynch with shaping his personal style—one that combines elements of classic French and Italian cuisine with modern techniques. His Culinary Masters Competition dinner began with simple canapés that emphasized the pure flavors of raw oysters, beef carpaccio, gently poached lobster, bluefin tuna, and buttered radishes topped with caviar. Increasingly complex plates followed, including an array of rabbit charcuterie, artichoke soup with a huge umami punch, luxurious langoustine-filled pasta, and a squab tour de force.

After starting his career in suburban restaurants north of Boston, Campbell went to work for Lynch at No. 9 Park restaurant on Beacon Hill in 2005. He learned Lynch's signature dishes by heart, particularly the prune gnocchi with foie gras sauce—her most requested recipe. In 2008, Lynch promoted Campbell to chef de cuisine, entrusting the reputation of No. 9 Park to his hands as she focused on developing a new dining complex on the South Boston Waterfront. In a single building, she expanded her French-Italian balancing act with Sportello, a diner-style restaurant serving bowls of homemade pasta, and a craft-cocktail bar called Drink. Two years later, she opened the fine-dining establishment Menton to universal acclaim.

"It was an incredibly busy time for her, and she gave me tremendous creative freedom at No. 9," Campbell says.

Once Lynch's new project took wing, Campbell struck out on his own. He left No. 9 Park to oversee the brasserie fare at Eastern Standard and then, on Halloween 2014, he opened his own restaurant: Café ArtScience in Kendall Square, the hip heart of Cambridge's biotech, robotics, and web sectors. David Edwards, a professor of biomedical engineering at Harvard and the restaurant's founder and co-owner, ensured that innovative technology was part of the mix—including vaporized drinks to be inhaled. But Campbell anchored the cuisine in a sprightly remix of local, seasonal ingredients, classical technique, and imaginative combinations. He graces roasted pumpkin soup with a fritter filled with goat cheese and inky huit-lacoeche, or pairs Peking duck with fried sushi rice, native beets, and wild Maine blueberries.

"I could eat Patrick's food every night," says Lynch. "That's why I selected him for this competition. I think he's brilliant." —DAVID LYON

PATRICK CAMPBELL: As a young cook, I spent as much time as I could eating around the city at high-end restaurants. Hands down, No. 9 Park was the best meal I had and the restaurant that I most identified with. I wanted to work there.

BARBARA LYNCH: I was attracted to your passion and, as you grew in the company, you became an amazing leader. You really mentored a lot of cooks.

PC: I think I spent the majority of my time at No. 9 making prune gnocchi. [Lynch laughs.] I don't think you could find a more eloquent way to represent Barbara and her restaurant. It's a prime example of drawing from both French

and Italian food, which is also a big part of what I do.

BL: Your cooking has both exacting technique and real heart. It's clear that you adore French cuisine, but you add interesting personal touches that reveal

a mastery of Italian cooking and your New England roots. Your roast chicken developed a cult following almost immediately—it's that good. And your potato tart is unbelievable. It's both rustic and refined and so utterly delicious: mashed potatoes mixed with grated Comté cheese served in a buttery, flaky pastry crust and topped with truffles. I love that you don't shy away from unapologetically rich and layered flavors rooted in the classics. You make them seem right at home in a space that celebrates science and innovation.



PC: For the Culinary Masters dinner, I wrote the menu to showcase my strengths as well as products that I love to work with. I believe in providing a well-rounded, progressive dining experience, which is why I started with mostly raw canapés before moving onto the charcuterie of rabbit. Rabbit is probably my favorite protein, and I wanted to show its versatility in a composed first course.

The artichoke soup has been a guest favorite every time I put it on the menu, and enjoying artichokes in a soup is pretty novel for most diners. The langoustine ravioli was meant to show how much your pasta influenced me. I feel like it really showcases the fine line that we walked

Top Dish: Duet of Organic Squab



THE HIGH POINT of Patrick Campbell's menu was a skillful mélange of dark flavors presaging the autumn dining season.

Campbell treated breast of squab as a *crêpinette*, rolling it in a thin membrane of caul fat and roasting it medium rare to make a fork tender morsel.

He presented the succulent braised squab leg on the bone, inviting diners to pick it up and nibble the rich meat. A bed of chopped celeriac provided an herbal base, while sautéed diced Ginger Gold apples and a roasted cap of a matsutake, or pine mushroom, added sweetness, texture, and spice. A final flurry of shaved Italian white truffles—the first of the season—brought an irresistible earthy finish. —D.L.

"Soft, juicy, melt-in-your-mouth meat. Really, really good."

—LUDOVICA GHIO

at No. 9 Park between French and Italian food. It's very indulgent and luxurious but has a very simple flavor profile. With the duo of squash, I wanted to show some technique, while I wanted to keep the dessert [chocolate-peanut butter pie and curried coconut panna cotta] a little savory and spicy. I'm not a fan of overly sweet desserts.



have pasta on the menu, but I never let go of my roots. Everyone is basically eating farm-to-table, and the closer you can source your products, the better.

PC: I think that farm-to-table is not really a food trend anymore—it's an expectation for a quality restaurant.

BL: What I loved about your dinner was that even though I gave you suggestions, you stuck to what you knew and what was comfortable. You have your style now.

PC: I'd characterize my food as ingredient-driven simplicity, and I learned a lot of that working with you. I

think Boston is the best city in the world for a chef. We have some of the best from both land and sea.

BL: The signature dish now at Menton is butter soup: butter, shellfish, caviar, milk, and honey. I'm a New Englander, so I think we're spoiled with shellfish—we

Campbell's first course—a masterful assiette of rabbit charcuterie—showcased the versatility of his favorite meat.

BL: Yes, but I think what will go away is the tasting menu. That has just gone out of control. A lot of people don't want to sit four and a half hours. People still love fine dining, but it's not just about the food.

PC: There has been an explosion of restaurant openings in Boston in the last two or three years. A lot of them are doing great stuff, but everyone has forgotten the formality of dinner. The service is very casual and the food just hits the table whenever it's ready. For me, it's a shame to see proper service go away. It's not that I ever want to feel like I can't speak over a certain volume or I can't enjoy myself. But I do hope that professionalism will become a trend again, and that people stop wearing plaids to serve me my bread course.

WATCH THE VIDEO



Off the Menu

See Patrick Campbell prepare parsnip cappellacci with green garlic puree, roasted porcini, morels, English peas, and Parmigiano at robbreport.com/campbell.

There Is a Better World Out There

SINCE 2012, BARBARA LYNCH has worked to help inner city children get “up and out,” as she puts it. “Growing up in a housing project, I know what it is like not to have a proper education, not to be shown the world, and not to have hope,” says Lynch, who chose her nonprofit organization, the Barbara Lynch Foundation, as a beneficiary for the *Robb Report* Culinary

Masters Competition. The group facilitates programs that aim to help children live healthier and take charge of their futures.

From 2013 to 2015, the foundation supported two programs in Boston Public Schools, including an elementary school curriculum that teaches students about food, healthy eating, and nutrition through the Boston Food Literacy Initiative. Students also learn how food is produced, even growing their own vegetables in a greenhouse at a K 6 school in Boston's South End. The curriculum is run by teachers, who invite frequent guests, which included Lynch. From

a pilot in a single school, the Food Literacy Initiative expanded to four inner city elementary schools last year. “We showed them how to grow food and to see that tomatoes don't come from a ketchup jar,” Lynch says. “We also took them on farm trips, because these kids had never seen a live cow. I know I hadn't when I was a kid.”

Lynch also felt that it was important to teach business skills to older students. As a result, the foundation partnered with the nonprofit Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship to train teachers to offer entrepreneurship programs in several Boston high schools. Lynch

also spoke to those classes, offering her own example. The entrepreneurship program, which began as a two classroom pilot, now encompasses 14 classrooms and reaches an additional 250 students.

The next project for the foundation will be identifying a major, multiyear initiative, which will be announced later this year. In the interim, it will continue to support local education projects. “I learned that there is a better world out there beyond the housing projects, and I want those kids to know that,” Lynch says. “I'm a city kid, and it's my time to give back.” —D.L.



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Golden State of Mind

For Christopher Kostow, the creative collaboration between Kim Floresca and Daniel Ryan takes the Western spirit east.

"Daring flavors and unique combinations—they are true to themselves and their culinary evolution."
—KEVIN MAUGHAN



Kostow praised Floresca and Ryan's innovative menu at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, which included a savory canapé called "rice cream cones."



In 2011, Christopher Kostow seemingly came out of nowhere to earn three Michelin stars at the Restaurant at Meadowood in St. Helena, Calif., where the then 34-year-old chef's impressive tasting menu incorporated modern techniques and pristine hyper-local ingredients to create a highly personal expression of Napa Valley's distinctive flavors. Yet anyone who tasted his creations a few years before at Chez TJ in Mountain View knew that Kostow's future was bright: The Victorian dining room was creaky, and the kitchen equipment was secondhand, but Kostow turned out dishes as fresh as those he currently produces. Today, every preparation on his ever-changing menu at Meadowood continues to reference Napa, whether he is smoking meat over grapevines or pickling the seeds from a prodigious crop of local okra to make white "caviar," which he serves in a tin accompanied by blini, sour cream, onion, and smoked fish.

Five years ago, not long before he earned his third star, Kostow was at a critical juncture. His longtime sous chef had left, and an unsolicited résumé from Kim Floresca, a California native, crossed his desk. She and her partner, Daniel Ryan, had begun cooking collaboratively at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colo., and gone on to work at some of the best restaurants in the world including Per Se in New York City and El Bulli in Roses, Spain. "She had a résumé like I hadn't seen before," Kostow says. "I had one conversation with her, and I knew she was the kind of person who would not let herself fail."

Floresca became the sous chef at Meadowood and then, 18 months later, was promoted to executive sous chef. Ryan left the French Laundry to join her as sous chef, and they resumed their collaboration. They worked together for another 18 months before leaving to take over One in Chapel Hill, N.C. Even though they are thousands of miles away making what Floresca calls "American progressive food with a nod to the South," they maintain a strong California sensibility—so strong that Kostow

nominated the pair as the best up-and-coming chefs cooking in the West Coast style for this year's Culinary Masters Competition.

Floresca and Ryan's competition dinner at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco highlights the products of their adopted home. In fact, Floresca brought almost every ingredient for the five-course dinner: lamb tartare sujuk with Parmesan cheese and fried clams; chestnut dumplings; Chicken of the Sea (cobia wrapped in chicken fat and roasted in schmaltz); rib eye encrusted with black rice and smoked beef fat; and a dessert made with cubes of sweet-potato cake, dots of pureed sweet potato and dulce de leche, tangerine sorbet, and shards of orange-blossom meringue.

On the night of the competition, a staffing problem forced Ryan to remain in North Carolina and Floresca to perform solo. After the tables were cleared, the chef took a deep breath and sat down with her mentor. —MICHAEL BAUER

KIM FLORESCA: I don't think I could ever do the food that they've been doing in the South for generations, and I'm not going to try. I can never do shrimp and grits as Bill Neal did, because he's the originator. I'm not going to be the person who makes fried chicken, because so many people can do it so much better. What I can do is pay homage to it.

CHRISTOPHER KOSTOW: There's no way Napa has the depth of something like the American South. Still, I believe that with all the great chefs that come through Napa, there is still so much that has not been touched or spoken about in cooking. You know, using the elements of wine production, which is so central to that economy and that culture, too. There's an understanding of what the Native Americans did as it relates to us. There's so much in the wild that you can use. That's what was exciting to me: You're in this new frontier, but a land that is so well examined. I think that's pretty exciting, but it will never be like the South.

KF: I think North Carolina actually has eight seasons, and we really start to build into what the following season is going to be. For us, it's a constant evolution. Something that we learned from Meadowood was that there should always be something in the works, and if there isn't—

CK: You're in trouble.

KF: You really, really are. If you become complacent, it becomes boring. So you realize that you need to plan.

CK: Especially when items go out of season. Napa has like 30 seasons. Grapes are really good for two weeks. Then you have to change that dish. If you're not always saying

Top Dish: Orange Flavors



A FAVORITE DISH of Kim Floresca's turned out to be the judges' favorite, too: Her dessert, called Orange Flavors, was built upon a favorite Southern ingredient, sweet potato, incorporating precise cubes of finely textured sweet potato cake with creamy dots of pureed sweet potato and dulce de leche. Fresh gooseberries added a tangy note, while bright citrus highlights were introduced with a drizzle of tangerine and clove vinaigrette, a dollop of tangerine sorbet, and orange blossom meringue. "It's acidic and refreshing," Floresca says. "Something that cleanses the palate."

—M.B.

"Sweet potato for dessert? Yes! It really worked."

—AGAPI BURKARD

"What are we doing next?" you can find yourself in the middle of a menu that's not perfect. There are chefs who have created systems to ensure they don't have to change the menu that much. Like, they plant a garden with six things, and those six things are always on the menu. I think that happens in the Bay Area more than people would like to admit. We just don't do that.



KF: I think a lot of people could have taught me how to cook, but you taught me how to eat well. The partnership

we had helped me break down the barriers of being too systematized at times and become more of a creator.

CK: So I taught you more how to taste rather than to just intellectualize?

KF: Not just taste. It's very difficult to put it into words. It's more how to love to eat well. Not just put something in your mouth and say it needs this or that. It's more emotional.

CK: You are probably more technique driven than I am.

KF: I don't know.

CK: It's good. Some people look at technique as the lines on the plate and stuff like that. But technique is properly sourcing the beef, knowing how to prepare it, all of that—that's technique. Maybe there are only two things on the plate, but man, a lot of things go into those two

things. A few years ago, I think cooking was a little more technical. We're stepping back a bit.

KF: You also have a great oversight as to what your end goal is—and how to get there.

CK: You need to have sort of a militaristic ability

to command discipline into a team. You have to be able to creatively conceptualize stuff. You have to have the physical wherewithal to do the actual job. The drive to keep it all going. It's a blue-collar job, simple as that. I don't think people realize the hours. A poet can write a poem, and there will always be that poem. To be a good chef, you're only as good as your last good meal, and that is exhausting. It's a really cool job, but not for the reasons

people think. It's cool because great chefs are Renaissance people. They're artists. They're craftsmen. They're thinkers. They're businesspeople. There's no other profession where you have that all wrapped up in one person.

Off the Menu

See Kim Floresca and Daniel Ryan make beef rib eye with heirloom black rice, smoked fat, braised red cabbage, and bitters, a dish from their Culinary Masters Competition menu, at robbreport.com/florescaryan.

WATCH THE VIDEO



Above: Lamb tartare. Right: Chicken of the Sea, a dish made with cobia, truffles, and aged grits.



Napa Untilled

"I'VE LIVED IN the valley eight years," Christopher Kostow says, "and all the discussion that happens in the valley is about development—who's converting what into what. There's no conversation about open space."

The Land Trust of Napa County—the organization Kostow chose as his beneficiary for the *Robb Report* Culinary Masters Competition—puts that conversation front and center. The group was formed in 1976 as a community nonprofit with the goal of preserving the natural character of Napa County. Since then, it has protected more than 55,000 acres, which is about 10 percent of the entire county. "In large part, the reason Napa looks the way it does now is the work of conservation organizations," says Kimberly Barrett, the trust's development manager. "If we were wall-to-wall wineries and

Silicon Valley-ish, no one would want to visit here."

The group has been responsible for nearly 200 land protection projects, including donations and purchases of property, agreements with local, state, and federal agencies, and easements allowing land to remain in private hands but with stipulations that it will be preserved as is. The easements involve a who's who of wineries, such as Cakebread Cellars, Heitz Wine Cellars, Joseph Phelps Vineyards, and Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. The Land Trust also operates nine permanent preserves open to the public through free hiking programs. "Once things are developed they don't get undeveloped," Kostow says. "As citizens of the modern world, all we want is space. And I don't even live in the city." —M.B.



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Manhattan Expressed

Michael White, New York's maestro of Italian cuisine, appreciates the freewheeling creativity of John Becker.



"Daring and innovative."
—CHRIS TANG



Becker, a protégé of White's, opened his dinner at New York's Langham Place with surprising canapés such as lamb tartare toast.

When John Becker flew to New York City for his Culinary Masters Competition dinner, he packed four big boxes with California ingredients:

Fuyu persimmons, matsutake mushrooms, Brussels sprouts from Half Moon Bay, Mendocino nori, and turnips still clumped with Santa Cruz soil. As the chef de cuisine at the Progress in San Francisco, Becker is particular about the site-specific nuances of his raw materials. But he is also a master of classical technique, having worked in the Manhattan kitchens of such culinary superstars as Alain Ducasse (Essex House), Pierre Schaedelin (Le Cirque), and Michael White (Ai Fiori).

White, a Wisconsin native who discovered he has a sublime touch with pasta, is the chef and proprietor of some of New York's most acclaimed Italian restaurants,

including Marea, Costata, and Osteria Morini. When he opened Ai Fiori in 2010, he hired Becker as his sous chef. "We always try to build a team of people who each bring something different to the table, and a lead person—a nucleus—within the group," White said. "John was that person." Becker, who was soon overseeing a number of White's restaurants, later became the opening chef at White's Chop Shop in London. By the time *Robb Report* approached White about nominating an up-and-coming chef from New York City to participate in the Culinary Masters Competition, Becker had departed to the West Coast; nevertheless, his former mentor still considers him the most formidable new talent to come out of the Big Apple in recent years.

In San Francisco, Becker found a new freedom at the helm of his own kitchen, unfettered by the idioms of French or Italian cuisine. His creativity was encouraged by the Progress's owners and executive chefs, Stuart Brioza and Nicole Krasinski, who first made waves with the dim-sum-style menu at their restaurant State Bird Provisions. At the Progress, dishes such as Treasure Chest Soup—a

wild combination of, among other things, fermented Thai sausage, trout quenelles, kimchi, and rice dumpings in a rich pork broth—are served banquet style, with the entire table sharing each platter. In February, the *San Francisco Chronicle* awarded the eatery three stars.

For his Culinary Masters Competition dinner—served at New York’s Langham Place—Becker drew inspiration from pivotal experiences on both the East and West Coasts: A lobster salad tinged with pickled lime and vadouvan, for example, represented his year in California, while sauerkraut agnolotti with smoked sablefish recalled New York’s famous appetizing shop, Russ & Daughters.

Given his restless curiosity and fondness for experiments, we were not especially surprised when, a few weeks after the dinner, Becker telephoned to say he was leaving the Progress to travel and reflect, starting in Tokyo. “At this point,” he said, “I’m really opening my mind up to the whole world.”

—MICHAEL BUSICO AND REGINA SCHRAMBLING

MICHAEL WHITE: John is ingredient savvy—always looking for new ones. And being from California, he knows good ingredients. Then he came to New York and had a great experience working at the Essex House with Alain Ducasse and also had good French training at Le Cirque. He was a great fit for Ai Fiori.

JOHN BECKER: My background was primarily European restaurants, and coming back to California, it’s been super influential—though my cooking is a world away from where it was a year ago. There are kind of no rules with the way we cook at the Progress. I’ve had the freedom to work with products I’ve never worked with before, and also techniques and ideas and flavor combinations that don’t always fit a European-style restaurant. It’s a no-holds-barred kind of cooking that’s opened my eyes to a whole world of food that I haven’t cooked in a restaurant setting.

MW: It’s his first time officially running a kitchen—his name is on the ticker tape, which is pretty exciting for a chef. It’s everybody’s dream to get the main gig, and he was definitely ready for it.

JB: When you look at our menu at the Progress, it can be a little bit all over the place. But when you eat there, there’s definitely a common thread that goes through every item on the menu. There is a voice that speaks through everything. We’re trying to do soulful, delicious, thoughtful food. Other than that, we are trying to be progressive, to move food forward, to move our ideas forward, with the kitchen as kind of a workshop.

MW: Cooking is method and technique. Once you learn the method and technique—whether it be French or Italian, those are the baseline—once you have those

Top Dish: Maine Lobster with Lime Pickle, Heart of Palm, and Pistachio Vadouvan



JOHN BECKER began preparing his top scoring first course nine months before the competition, when he pickled Bearss limes with fresh turmeric, ginger, and “tons” of other spices. The pickled limes added a bright, mysterious flavor to a light dressing made with yogurt and aioli—a subtle supporting player for a salad of tender lobster, juicy slices of fresh young coconut, and crisp heart of palm, which had been harvested in Hawaii just three days before.

“The pickled-lime yogurt is amazing.”
—JAMIE GORDON

A scattering of toasted pistachio vadouvan—made with sweet Sicilian pistachios, shallots, curry, fresh Hawaiian nutmeg, and other spices—tied all of the elements together. “When you hear about all of these flavors, it sounds a little far fetched,” Becker says. “But I think it came out real nicely.” —M.B.

under your belt, you can really move how you want. There are lots of great people who can execute. There are very few who can put things together and have it sing.

JB: The matsutake dish on my competition menu started because I wanted to do a vegetarian dish, and matsutakes made sense because they’re in season, and they’re my favorite mushroom. The aroma is so unique—there’s a pine element to it—and I love the dense texture of them cooked, and I think they’re equally delicious raw. For this dish, they were roasted in butter, and we also had some shaved raw on top. The sake-lees brown-butter sauce was made with sake lees from a distillery in Berkeley, and there was also a little bit of yuzu juice and brown butter instead of whole butter. This sauce took the idea of a *beurre blanc*, a white-wine butter sauce, and kind of twisted everything a little bit, made it a little

Below: Matsutake with Mendocino nori and sake-lees brown butter. Right: Ginger honey cake with sesame ice cream.



bit deeper and darker. The mushrooms were from Northern California, near the Oregon border; the Brussels sprouts were from the town I grew up in, Half Moon Bay; and the braised nori was from Mendocino, just an hour north. So it was also about me connecting to all these ingredients in California—super regional,

but the flavors were also pretty Japanese.

MW: Once you learn a bit of this, a little bit of that, with time in the kitchen, you start to bring a little bit of Ducasse, a little bit of Michael White, and a little bit of John Becker himself to the cooking. You start to pair all of these things together. You develop your own style.

JB: The sauerkraut-agnolotti course was inspired by my time in New York, but really it came from Russ & Daughters. The whole thing started with their smoked sablefish—just beautifully smoked sablefish and a goat cream cheese. I found that to be so peculiar, sort of breaking the rules, but just so delicious. I served the agnolotti with whipped potatoes with goat Robiola, an Italian, textured, creamy cheese with a tang. But I used the goat cheese in the way you'd use fish sauce—a strong flavor used in a small amount to add depth. Then we just found some beautiful black cod and cured it and smoked it and cooked it very slowly. And I had to do pasta, because I'm just such a fan of pasta, and Michael was there. But the agnolotti were really inspired by pierogies. They

were filled with potato, crème fraîche, sauerkraut, and onions. We cooked the sauerkraut in a little butter to mellow it out. Never in Italian food would you see potato-filled pasta!

MW: When I started cooking at Spiaggia in 1991, nobody knew what risotto was. Nobody knew what porcini mushrooms were. I was putting Parmigiano in and whipping it with butter and calling it risotto. Now everybody makes risotto at home. It's amazing what's happened in 20 years. Can you imagine 20 years from now?

The ABCs of Eating Well

MICHAEL WHITE has built an empire on an exultant style of Italian cooking, but he knows that cooking is a basic skill that many young people have not mastered. To that end, he has long supported the Sylvia Center, a nonprofit organization in New York City that teaches children and their families how to prepare healthy, affordable meals.

The classes, which are largely taught in public housing community centers, are divided into courses for “young chefs” (7 to 12 years old), teens, and families. Each session lasts six to 12 weeks and covers “all they need to know to cook on a budget,” says director Anna Hammond. The fall, winter, and summer programs include just 10 students per class, with a student to teacher ratio of 4 to 1. Students also spend time at Katchkie Farm, an organic farm in upstate New York, planting seeds, weeding, harvesting, and then cooking what they have grown.

Since the center was founded in 2007, almost 15,000 students have taken the courses and now some of them are passing along the knowledge. The Sylvia Center's new culinary apprenticeship program offers teens a 60 hour after school course for school credit that allows them to teach the class in summer camps. “This year, 25 graduates taught 800 students,” Hammond says. “Next year's class will be 50 students. Having almost peers teach young kids how to cook healthy food is one of our biggest successes.”

In addition to naming the Sylvia Center as his Culinary Masters beneficiary, White has helped raise funds for the center's \$1.2 million annual budget and offers advice on recipes, jobs in the food industry, and curricula. Next year, he will also become a guest speaker in classrooms. “It builds on what he does with his own staff,” Hammond says. “He is dedicated to lasting change.” —M.B.

WATCH THE VIDEO



Off the Menu

See John Becker prepare Mount Tam Parisian gnocchi, a dish from his competition dinner, at robbreport.com/becker.



LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM: CORDERO STUDIOS/CORDERO STUDIOS.COM; BOTTOM RIGHT: SASHA BOAK-HELLY



Nick Springett Photography



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New World Order

Norman Van Aken, who influenced a generation of chefs in Miami, singles out **Phillip Bryant** as the talent who points the way toward the future.

"Brilliant! So many surprises!"
—ROXANNE DEBLAUWE



When Phillip Bryant assembled his kitchen team for the Culinary Masters Competition, he did not have to look far. His sous chefs were

Veronica Valdivia—his girlfriend and the director of operations at their Coral Gables restaurant, the Local: Craft Food and Drink—and Michael Bryant, his older brother and the chef at the Larchmont in Los Angeles. Norman Van Aken may have nominated Phillip as the most promising culinary talent in the Southeast, but he has been a mentor to all three of them.

"We owe him the world," Michael said, pausing as he prepped an appetizer of steak tartare on a jagged benne-seed cracker with deviled-egg mousse, homemade hot sauce, pickled mustard, and cured egg yolk. "Chef Norman taught us everything—philosophy, discipline, products. It's our whole lifestyle now."

Van Aken is, of course, the father of New World cuisine, a style he created in the 1980s by synthesizing the culinary scene of South Florida—with its Latin, Caribbean, Southern, Asian, and African influences—in what he called fusion, creating signature dishes such as pork Havana. His cooking came into its own at the original Norman's restaurant in Coral Gables. Today, Norman's is located in the Ritz-Carlton in Orlando, but Van Aken remains a key part of the Miami dining scene: Not only does he broadcast a twice-weekly food show on the city's NPR affiliate, but he is preparing to open a cooking school there later this year.

Bryant, who grew up in rural Virginia, met Van Aken when brother Michael hired him as a line cook at Norman's Los Angeles. Van Aken was impressed with Phillip's intensity and intellect and promoted him to run the kitchens at Van Aken establishments in Florida, which is where the young chef met Valdivia. Bryant eventually moved on to Yardbird Southern Table & Bar and became the executive chef of the Local in 2014. There he creates soulful food from scratch, making even his own hot sauce, butter, vinegar, mustard, and American cheese.



Van Aken's influence shined throughout Bryant's dinner at the Ritz-Carlton in Half Moon Bay, Calif. Opposite, top: Brunswick stew.



Though his cooking is very different from Van Aken's, his mentor's influence is evident in the way Bryant effortlessly interprets classic Southeastern fare with touches from around the world. For his Culinary Masters Competition dinner at the Ritz-Carlton in Half Moon Bay, Calif., he seamlessly transitioned from an elegantly perfect terrine of foie gras (marbled with red-bell-pepper ash and served with Sally Lunn bread, spiced applesauce, and a black-tea reduction) to earthy Southern fare in the form of a Brunswick stew elevated with a broth as deep and rich as a demi-glace.

"His cuisine has refinement and historical appreciation," Van Aken says. "When he cooks for me, he takes me to a place where there is a kind of Faulknerian honesty."

—MICHAELNE BUSICO

NORMAN VAN AKEN: Phil's older brother Michael was with me at the original Norman's in Coral Gables, and when we opened up Norman's Los Angeles on the Sunset Strip, we raised Mike up to executive sous chef, and he went out there. One day I was visiting, and Mike said, "I would like you to meet our new line cook—Phil Bryant." What were you, 19?

PHILLIP BRYANT: Maybe 22, 23.

NVA: He had the hair down to his shoulders, and he was a little bit ahead of the curve tattoo-wise, for me anyway. I was like, wow, your little brother, huh? Looks like quite a hell-raiser. Let's see how he does. But you came up the ranks, too—you have that passion. And when I started a project back in Florida, I asked if you wanted to come to Key West. I'm proud of you. I'm happy to see your continued growth and ascension.

PB: The first time I met you—I can tell my story now—was the first time I ever met a real-deal chef. I went in to the walk-in to grab something, and you were there, just doing your usual thing, inspecting the produce. You turned and looked at me, and I got scared and ran away! But as I got to know you, I realized you're a humble guy who got everything through hard work and talent and ingenuity. You showed me that I can do it too, and that this is the right path for me. The hardest part of the competition menu was locking down a dish that would be an homage to one of your dishes—there were so many I loved making at Norman's. We finally settled on pork Havana.



NVA: It is a dish that's emblematic of the Cuban community and how it celebrates its unique spirit, both in Cuba and the United States. It was fascinating to see you express pork Havana in your own way.

PB: Instead of a tenderloin, I used a pork collar—a European cut that's typically called a coppa and is a little more marbled. And instead of baked Haitian-style grits, I used a staple of the South: rice grits, or rice middlings, as they're called. The middlings come about as you're milling the rice: As you're coming out with these perfectly polished grains, you get little pieces that end up cracked or imperfect. They were set aside and pretty much became the food of poor people. But it is a great product; more of the starch gets brought out when you cook it, and it gets this creamy texture. And I think it's the story of where a lot of Southern food comes from. It doesn't come from the big houses and the aristocrats and things like that. It's a food almost of struggle and suffering.

Top Dish: Terrine of Grilled Foie Gras

"I'M A FIRM believer in hitting them hard right out of the gate," Phillip Bryant says, and his first course did exactly that: The foie gras terrine, striated with red bell pepper ash, beguiled judges and garnered the top scores of the night. Bryant underlined the subtle char of the pepper with a drizzle of

black tea reduction, and instead of the usual toasted brioche, he served the foie gras with cubes of griddled Sally Lunn, a yeasty, buttery bread that goes back to colonial Virginia. Dabs of spiced apple butter and "bread 'n' butter" pickled lychee completed a luscious and surprising dish that wore its lineage lightly. —M.B.



"Smoky, sweet, and savory."
—CHRISSEY WEAN

NVA: I think the rice middlings were also a notch less filling, and it made the dish even better.

PB: The second course—Brunswick stew—was also some-

thing I grew up eating in and around Virginia. It's one of my favorite things to eat—one of the dishes, as the saying goes, you can really put your foot in. It's a hunter-style soup made out of small-game meat. Traditionally, it's rabbit and sometimes squirrel—



WATCH THE VIDEO

Off the Menu

See Phillip Bryant prepare pan-roasted black grouper with calabaza confit, hen of the woods mushrooms, and truffles—a dish from his competition dinner—at robbsreport.com/bryant.

NVA: I didn't see any squirrels running around in San Francisco, so we had to opt out of that one.

PB: We did *not* opt for squirrel, but we gently braised the rabbit and used that liquid as the base for a rich broth. We fortified that with a dark roux, which has a very caramel-mocha flavor to it, dark nuances that really develop the wholeness of a sauce. Then we finished it off with some dry sherry and garnished the dish with a simple chicken sausage and a succotash of Appalachian sour corn, tomatoes, and butterbeans, and pickled okra and star-anise jus. It's fun to take a classic dish and

reinvent it but at the same time not lose the soul behind the dish. You know—that feeling you get when you first taste it. You don't want to lose that. A lot of times, when people try to reinterpret a dish, they end up losing that.

NVA: I would rather food be amazingly delicious than very interesting. Very interesting doesn't really cut it for me. It's like the blind date with the girl or the boy with the great personality. It's like, well that's nice. But I want to fall in love. I want to be knocked over. I want to be wowed. I think that's what this dish did, too.

PB: That's one of the main things I learned from you—besides structure and the technique and everything else. When you cook something, it's got to be damn good. Hopefully we accomplished that too.

NVA: Your food is honest and powerful; it's real, and it's well-thought-out. Sometimes when you are that honest, it can take a while for you to be noticed. That's one of the frailties of our culture—people have to be weird and ornate to be looked at, but that's not long lasting. You are about the long run. You're a cook's cook, a chef's chef. You would rather be in the kitchen than anywhere else in the world, because that's where your heart is beating most of the rhythm.

PB: Thanks, chef. But I am a little weird and ornate, too. **R**

Local Heroes

AS HIS MANY social media followers know, Norman Van Aken is a proud grandfather, and he was thinking about his granddaughter when he considered his beneficiary for the Culinary Masters Competition. "I wanted to find a group that was local and working with children," he says. "A group that didn't have anybody who was really being an angel to them."

He decided on the CJ Foundation for Children in Need, a 9 year old nonprofit based in Boynton Beach, Fla., that supports children and families, particularly those affected by autism or



cancer. The foundation's efforts include the CJ Miracle Project, which provides a "respite" recreational program each month for school age children with autism, allowing parents a break from caregiving. "The kids basically play," says Gail Casale, a fund raiser with the foundation. "We have all sorts of games and puzzles

that the therapists work with them on, and they can do the games with their siblings too, to help them socialize and interact."

The foundation also offers annual grants for children with autism whose families would not otherwise be able to pay for therapy, which can cost up to \$50,000 a year. "Most people don't know how expensive it is,"

Casale says, "and that insurance doesn't cover it, or limits the coverage." In 2013, the foundation opened the 6,000 book Village Library in Toussaint L'Ouverture High School in southwest Delray Beach, a community that had not had a library before. And each year, its Adopt a Wish program funds up to three wishes in partnership with the Make a Wish Foundation of South Florida. The foundation's work is handled by nearly 100 volunteers and eight board members and supported by fund raising and donations. —M.B.



Mitchell

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A desk that keeps you on your feet, a high-tech cup for smart hydration, a new spa at an old favorite, and more.



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ROYAL SOIL

GUESTS WILL BE TREATED LIKE royalty at any of the resorts mentioned in our spa suites feature (starting on page 166), and one of the properties—Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve—even resides in the province where the Thai royal family has its summer palace. There is a link to royalty much closer to home, however. The reigning monarch of Thailand, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, was born in Cambridge, Mass., in 1927, making him the only living monarch born on foreign soil.

His father, Prince Mahidol, first came to Cambridge in 1916 to study public health at Harvard University and MIT. He met a Thai nursing student who was studying at the nearby Simmons College and married her. The prince, whose modest homes included a YMCA in Boston and a small apartment near school where he lived with his young family, preferred to be known as Mr. Songkla. Before the current king was given his full Thai name by his grandmother, the queen, his name was recorded on his birth certificate as Baby Songkla.

King Bhumibol, now 88, is the longest-reigning monarch alive, but he was not originally intended to be king. He was the family's second son and did not ascend the throne until 1946, after his older brother was found murdered in his bedroom in the royal palace in Bangkok. The city of Cambridge has since designated a square in King Bhumibol's honor, and the Massachusetts-based King of Thailand Birthplace Foundation has installed historic plaques on all the residences the king's father and mother occupied during their time in Boston. As Americans travel to Thailand for respite and adventure, many Thai citizens make the pilgrimage to Cambridge and Brookline to honor the birthplace of their beloved king.

JANICE O'LEARY

EDITOR, ROBB REPORT HEALTH & WELLNESS

COVER IMAGES: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: VILLA MANZU; LAS VENTANAS AL PARAISO. A ROSEWOOD RESORT: PHULAY BAY. A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE: BORGO SANTO PIETRO. ON PAGE 151: TOP RIGHT: RIGOBERTO MORENO; THIS PAGE: BOTTOM: HUGH KRETSCHMER



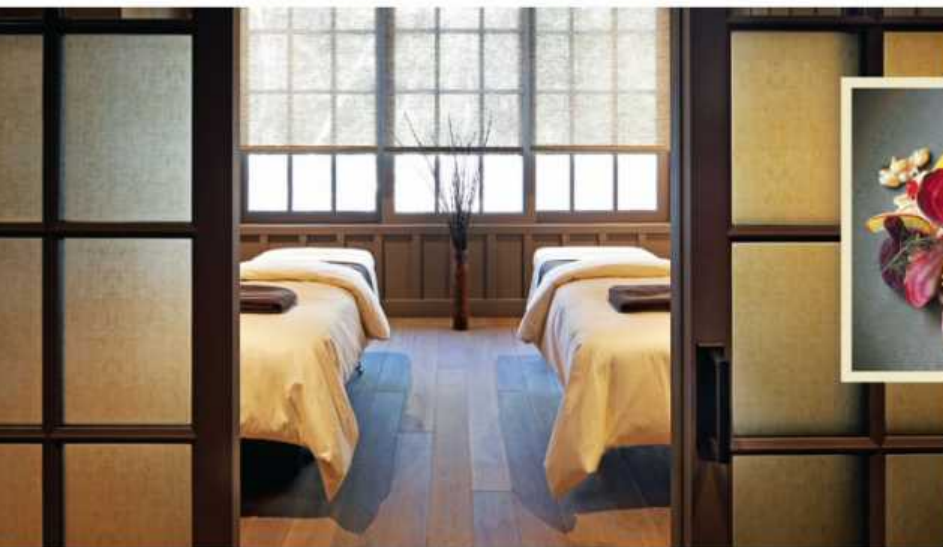
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—ALAN YEUNG, MD, INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGIST

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FIT FARE

Debuting with Meadowood's spa are healthy new menu options.

REJUVENATION

Suite & Savory

IN ADDITION TO REFRESHING THE look of its guest rooms and golf course, the popular Napa Valley resort Meadowood has added a stunning new spa. The space incorporates natural woods and textiles in a rustic-modern design, from the entrance to the fountain-lined hallway and eight treatment suites. Each suite includes a bathroom and steam shower, a lounge area, and views of forested hills. Two relaxation gardens offer sitting areas, steam rooms, saunas, and mineral soaking pools. Services start at \$225 and include massages, facials, and

body treatments. The spa outdoes itself with its signature packages, such as the five-and-a-half-hour Curated Collection experience: a customized scrub, wrap, facial, massage, and specialty therapy. All spa packages (\$595 to \$1,235) include lunch and time in a private suite. Accompanying the spa will be a deeper focus on wellness, including a healthy spa-cuisine menu that expands upon the fresh juices previously offered. Future plans at the resort include a revived fitness center with an on-site wellness coach. » meadowood.com —JANICE O'LEARY

MEMBERS ONLY

Rx REDUX

WITH THE LAUNCH OF A MEMBERSHIP-BASED PLATFORM, CEDRA PHARMACY AIMS to take health management to a new level of service. The program caters to people who have complicated health challenges, such as diabetes or Alzheimer's, and take many medications. Cedra offers medication reviews, in home visits, online refills, next day delivery of prescriptions, and 24 hour emergency support, but it also takes steps beyond pharmaceutical management into more general wellness. Membership packages (\$3,000 to \$6,500 per month) include blood glucose monitoring for diabetics, one to two massages per month, in home or in store nutrition consultations, weekly personal training sessions, and more. Based in New York City, the pharmacy plans to expand its service nationally with a Dallas boutique opening in February. The service is available even when one is far from home. » cedrapharmacy.com —J.O.

GEAR

STANDING OVATION

TO COUNTER THE DETRIMENTS of a sedentary office existence, Stir has created its Kinetic desks, which encourage the shift between sitting and standing. The sleek F1 model (\$4,990) comes in a white or black finish with actuating steel legs. A touchscreen pad allows the user to program height preferences for standing and sitting. Through Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connections, the desk will communicate with Fitbit activity trackers and record the calories burned while standing. The desk will also remind the user to sit or stand after a designated period of time with a gentle up-and-down movement called a "whisperbreath." Sensors on the desk's underside detect usage, so over time it learns the user's behavior and will adjust the settings accordingly. » stirworks.com —J.O.

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SKINCARE

B WELL

SUN WORSHIPPERS HAVE a reason to rejoice over a new means of protection from the sun's damaging rays. A recent study confirms the benefits of ingesting vitamin B3 to protect against ultraviolet radiation. The phase 3 study, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, examined

participants in a double-blind, randomized, controlled trial who had at least two nonmelanoma skin cancers, such as basal cell carcinoma or squamous cell carcinoma, in the last five years. Compared with those in the placebo group, the patients taking a daily 500-milligram oral dose

of vitamin B3 had a 23 percent lower rate of developing new nonmelanoma skin cancers over a one year period. They also developed between 11 and 20 percent fewer premalignant actinic keratoses. Still pack the sunscreen, but slip a bottle of vitamin B3 into your valise as well. —J.O.

TRAVEL

Desert Oasis

THE LEGENDARY SPA DESTINATION MIRAVAL CELEBRATED ITS 20 YEAR anniversary with a modern makeover. The guest rooms have received a plush upgrade, but the most impressive addition is the new fitness center and sport programming. While the Arizona resort still retains its core of spiritual wellness offerings, the new focus on fitness fulfills a guest need. Group classes, such as the morning abs and glutes workshop, take place in the center's glass-walled studio with views of saguaros and ocotillos in the surrounding Sonoran desert. The resort added a Pilates studio for one-on-one lessons with fitness supervisor Pam Trudeau, who is versed in both classic and Ron Fletcher methods. Other offerings of note include a floating meditation class, where participants peacefully reflect in aerial yoga silks suspended from the ceiling, and a noninvasive, high-tech metabolic rate analysis that is followed by a consultation with one of the resort's nutritionists. Private training sessions are also available. >> miravalresorts.com —J.O.



HYDRATION

CHEERS TO GOOD HEALTH

CAN BEING WELL HYDRATED improve one's mood? Sharpen mental machinations? The researchers behind the new Pryme Vessyl cup (\$99) think so. "Mood balance, cognitive performance, attention, focus—all are dramatically impacted by your hydration," says Hanson Lenyoun, MD, a Harvard University graduate and Columbia-trained physician who helped develop the 16-ounce glass-lined cup, which logs how much fluid a person imbibes throughout the day. The cup syncs up with a smartphone app that collects details about one's age, weight, and activity, then feeds it through an algorithm to gauge a user's unique, fluctuating hydration needs. A thin light display on the cup's side conveys how well the user is meeting his or her hydration needs on a scale of zero to 100. When levels are low, users are encouraged to take a bigger sip. "Just a one percent change in hydration status can affect your cognitive abilities and focus," says Dr. Lenyoun. The cup can be recharged on its wireless charging coaster. >> prymevevssyl.com —CAROLYN MEERS

BOTTOM: KEN HAYDEN

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Guests of the Peninsula Hong Kong can work out while enjoying panoramic views of the city from the hotel's pool.

Fit Trip

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SOJOURN WITH AN EXPERT APPROACH TO STAYING IN SHAPE.

BY JANICE O'LEARY

GLOBE-TROTTING CAN MAKE adhering to a fitness regimen a challenge, but savvy travelers might find they can log more than their daily 10,000 steps with just a few tweaks or that exercising can help them see more of their host city. Two personal trainers and a wellness expert from the Mayo Clinic offer their advice for staying fit while traveling. These simple tips may be the difference between another trip with good intentions and one where you stay fit—and possibly raise the bar.

- **INVESTIGATE AIRPORTS** ahead of time if you are flying commercial. Many airports offer yoga studios, and some, such as those in Minneapolis-Saint Paul and Quebec, map walking paths through terminals, complete with mileage, says Angela Murad, a wellness dietitian with the Mayo Clinic Healthy Living Program. Arrive early to relieve stress and get your workout in all at once.

- **RESEARCH YOUR DESTINATION** for wellness offerings. Look for fitness options near your hotel that offer the type of workout you most enjoy, from spin classes to outdoor boot camps, says Rick Hagaman of

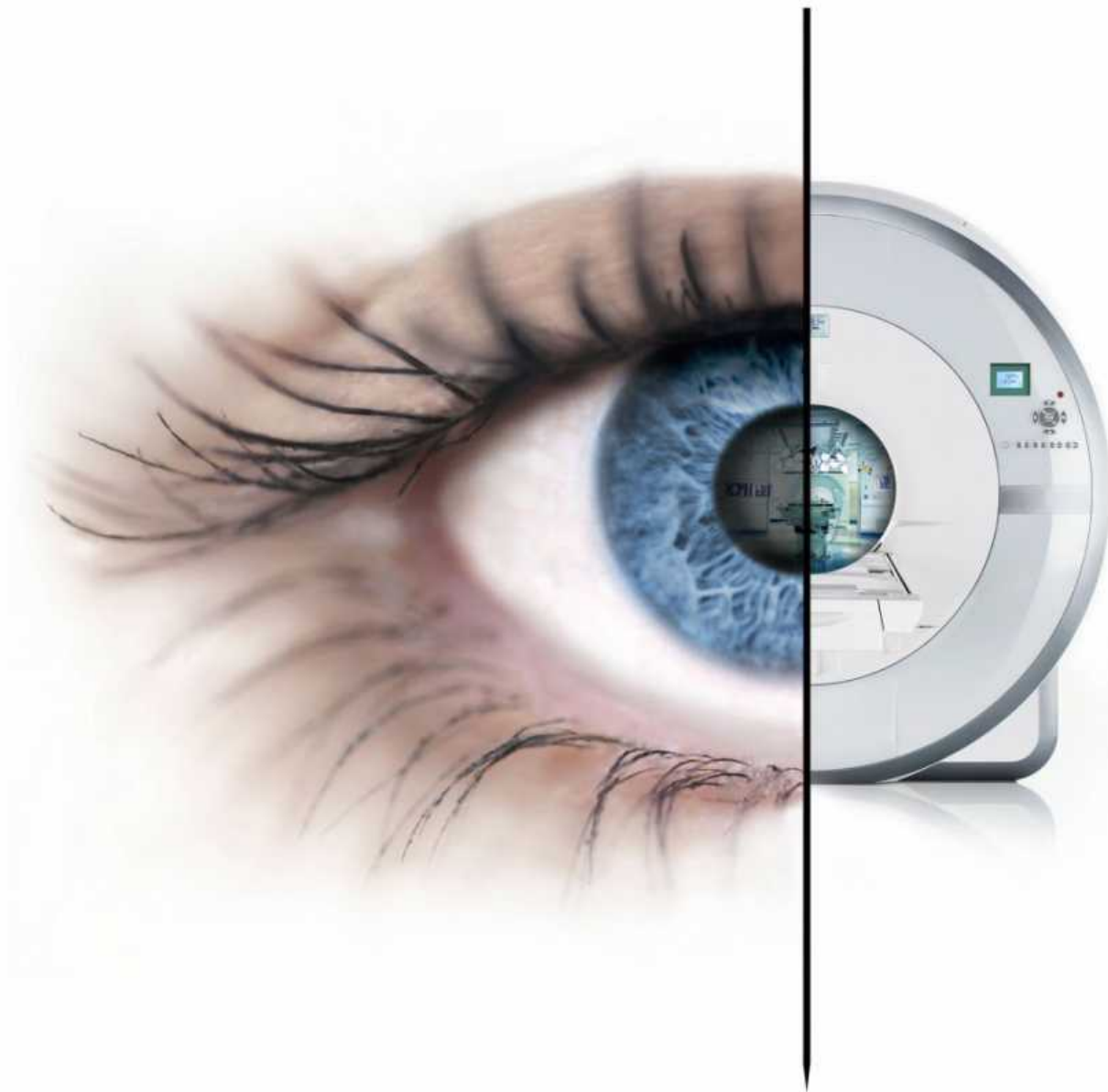
Blue Clay Fitness in Los Angeles. “Fitness is another way to experience the culture of your destination,” Hagaman says. Whether you take a popular local class or walk or run the streets, “you might discover an entirely new side of a city.” Steve Jordan, another Los Angeles-based trainer, recommends staying near a park when possible, or even taking a cab to a park in your destination city. “Diving into the natural habitat can provide obstacles and scenery that challenge your mind and body,” he says.

- **ENLIST THE HELP** of the hotel concierge. A concierge may assist in booking slots in studios or provide you with a running-trail map at check-in. When dining in, arrange to have the chef prepare a low-calorie menu to eliminate temptations at meals.

- **CONSULT YOUR REGULAR TRAINER** for a customized travel workout. Share the details of your trip with your personal coach so he or she can craft a workout that meets your fitness goals and includes your preferences. If you are flying private, ask for an in-flight routine, such as planks in the aisle or triceps dips off your seat.

- **EXPLORE THE FITNESS AMENITIES** at the resort. Some hotel gyms offer classes and personal training sessions. Speak with a concierge to reserve a spot. Consider booking a class or committing to a training time before you arrive. “Setting an appointment will greatly increase the chances that you work out,” says Hagaman. Some hotels, such as the Four Seasons Los Angeles at Beverly Hills, offer in-room iPads with exercise videos you can tailor to your needs. Fairmont Hotels & Resorts will supply fitness apparel to its President’s Club members who book in advance.

- **GET AN EARLY START.** Jordan recommends working out before breakfast. “Vacations are spent sightseeing, relaxing, and exploring the new space, so exercising later in the day can be challenging or downright impossible, regardless of motivation,” he says. Hagaman suggests asking the front desk to point you toward the fitness center at check-in and taking five minutes to scope it out. “This will take the ‘I-don’t-even-know-where-the-gym-is-or-what-equipment-it-has’ excuse off the table,” he says. “Once you have time to exercise, you will know exactly where to go and what types of activities you can do.” ♦



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MICHAEL F. ROIZEN, MD

is the chief wellness officer and chair at the Wellness Institute of the Cleveland Clinic. He is the author of RealAge and a coauthor of the You series of books, a corecipient of the 2011 Paul G. Rogers Health Communications Award from the National Library of Medicine, and a member of the Robb Report Health & Wellness editorial board.



Help Stress Help You

FIVE STRATEGIES TO INCREASE LONGEVITY BY CHANGING YOUR RESPONSE TO STRESS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DANIEL HERTZBERG

WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH doctrines, we accept many of them as absolutes: Broccoli is good, cigarettes are bad, and never—under any circumstances—should you perform a knee replacement on yourself. More often than not, we are correct: Most of our health mantras come about after years of science have

confirmed some variation of $a + b = c$. Sometimes we do not have enough data to really know the answer yet, but other times, health messages that we hear day after day are either wrong or outdated.

Stress falls into this category. For too long, we have been hammered with the message that stressful events are bad, and therefore we must prevent stress. Stressful events get compared with rough

“ We need the challenges of life to keep us stimulated, engaged, and passionate about what we do and who we are. The point is not to avoid stressful events but to minimize the aging impact of stress. ”

—MICHAEL F. ROIZEN, MD

ocean seas, battering your brain and churning up angst that wreaks biological havoc on the body. What you need, the thinking goes, is tranquility: flat-as-glass water with no chop, no disruption—just a peaceful existence that allows you to sit back and watch the sun rise and the sun set, idling your life away. Well, that is just wrong!

While it is absolutely true that stressful events can mix up your innards like a blender, the wrongly framed message is that the only way to stop the turmoil is to avoid stress and settle down to an easy-peasy existence. The end goal is not to bubble-bath your way through every day; we need the challenges of life to keep us stimulated, engaged, and passionate about what we do and who we are. The point is not to avoid stressful events but to minimize the aging impact of stress.

But here is the key point with stress: The human body, at least evolutionarily, knows exactly how to handle stress, even if you do not consciously have the slightest clue. What do I mean by that? Well, when the body is under stress, it reacts by helping us get out of the situation. In generic terms, this is the fight-or-flight response. In biological terms, it is quite masterful.

Thousands of years ago, if you found yourself locking eyes with a sharp-toothed beast, you had two choices if you did not want to end up as a Paleolithic appetizer: You would either get the heck out of there or say, “Let’s go, big boy, want some of this?” You flee or you face off. Here’s the thing: Your body can do neither in its normal, everyday, ho-hum state. How the heck are you supposed to summon the capacity to bolt out of a dangerous situation or punch with hammer-like power if you are peacefully lollygagging along in life?

So the body essentially pushes the red emergency button to activate a stress response. Heart rate increases, blood pressure rises, and a series of hormonal responses kick in—giving the body the power to run or to strike. All of those responses are good; they are what allow blood to pump and energy to get to your muscles to take care of the task in front of you. They raise energy and alertness, as well as blood sugar to fuel muscles and provide the wherewithal to get away. And when you are safely at home, disaster averted, your system quiets down and goes back to its chilling-on-a-rock state of happiness.

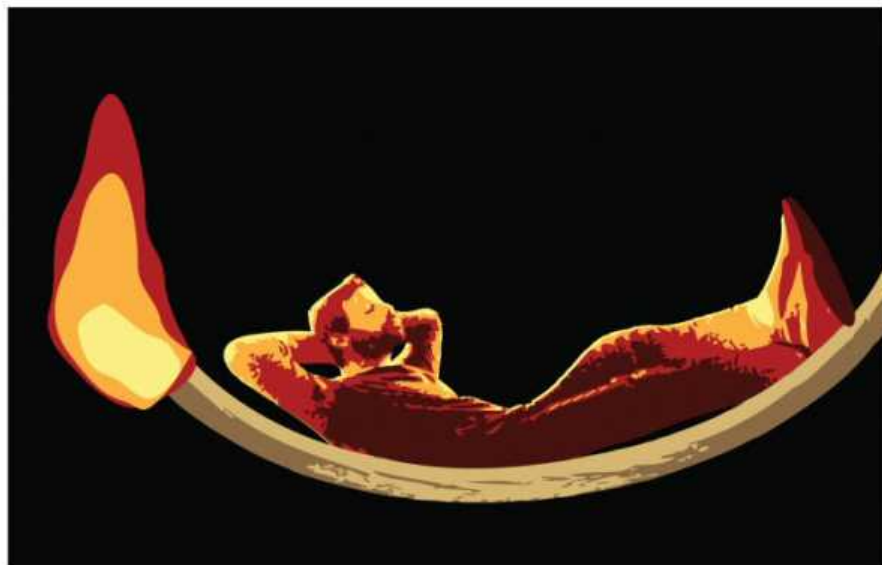
Now fast-forward to a time when sharp-toothed animals come in the form of grueling travel schedules, deadlines, in-laws, health issues, divorce, kids getting in trouble at school, and all the zillion other things that can cause stress. Those problems linger. You cannot always fight or flee and be done with the problem in front of you. Biologically, the emergency button is not on for a short period and then off: It’s on all the time. And that means the heart rate soars, blood pressure increases, and hormone levels elevate—for longer periods than they are designed to—and that has a direct effect on your health.

Increased cortisol and epinephrine, also known as adrenalin (two of the stress hormones that rise when your pituitary gland tells your adrenal glands that you are under duress), raise your blood sugar so your muscles have energy to run or punch. But that increase now fouls up the protein that forms a grout-like substance between the cells that tile the inner layer of your arteries, making them more vulnerable to high blood pressure and more likely to develop tears or nicks. Once your arteries tear or sustain damage,

the body tries to repair them by sending lousy LDL-cholesterol-laden fatty streaks, which become (over years or even decades) plaques and then blockages. That furthers the process of increasing blood pressure and your risk for heart attacks, strokes, impotence, memory loss, and other cardiovascular problems. In a state of chronic stress, all that excess blood sugar usually ends up in the form of damaging belly fat, which causes inflammation and impairs your infection-fighting defense system. You also raise your risk of developing diabetes, as well as autoimmune diseases and cancer. What’s more, cortisol decreases your memory reserve by pruning your brain connections.

Stress is not damaging in its own right. And it is not damaging because it makes you depressed and frustrated and anxious, although those reactions can be destructive. The greatest harm stems from the domino effect of the chemical reactions caused by chronic stress. Stress should not be defined as the event itself but rather your reaction to the event.

The goal is to mitigate the stress response so that, biologically speaking, your body is not aging from stress. I can tell you that eating X, Y, and Z foods will help ease inflammation and improve your overall health, and walking 10,000 steps a day will reverse some of the destructive processes that are going on in your body. But easing stress is not like curing appendicitis. No single prescription works for everybody. And unfortunately, there is no 400-milligram dose of Thai massage that will automatically help all people manage their stressors better. Instead, you have to figure out which prescription works best for you. Many choices work, with one or more of the following working for almost everyone.



1. Identify and monitor

THOUGH SOME SOURCES OF STRESS ARE easy to identify, it can be difficult to determine what is truly bothering you. Lashing out at your kids may be a reaction not to what your kids did but to an extra assignment piled on at work. The first step to managing your stress is to pinpoint the culprit. Sharecare has developed an app (that some of us at the Cleveland Clinic are testing) for this called Living in the Green—available now for *Robb Report* readers in a beta version on Android phones (iPhone version soon to come). Your voice patterns for conversations reflect your stress levels. Your muscles, in particular your vocal cords, tighten up oh-so slightly when you experience stress. So your stress level can be measured by variations in the tone and pitch (fractals) of your speech. Those fractal levels in your phone conversations, and even your choice of words in your written messages, texts, tweets, and e-mails are analyzed by the app. You can learn how each and every event affects you.

By monitoring your stress levels and learning how to modulate them, you can “live in the green” with calls and conversations and after events that previously would have caused much stress to you and much aging to your body and brain.

2. Intense physical activity

WALK 30 MINUTES, STRETCH, DO YOGA—just get up and move! Exercise, simply, is one of life’s greatest stress relievers.

3. Do the opposite

EVERY EMOTION HAS AN URGE TO ACT that goes with it. When we feel afraid or anxious, we avoid things; when we are depressed or sad, we withdraw (stay in bed). When we are angry, we want to lash out or yell. Unfortunately, each of these mood-inspired behaviors actually increases the accompanying emotion rather than decreasing it. However, if you can act the opposite way, you can dial down the emotion. Angry at someone? Rather than lash out, be empathetic. Depressed? Instead of shutting yourself in, go out. Rather than letting emotions determine what you do, take control and choose how you feel.

4. Use guided imagery

GO TO A QUIET PLACE, RELAX, AND BREATHE deeply, then visualize yourself in different scenarios. Some variations include imagining yourself in a pleasant place (the beach), fighting disease (seeing your good immune cells fighting off bad germs), and practicing for a big performance (doing well in your

GET THE LIVING IN THE GREEN STRESS APP FIRST*

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sharecare.realgreen>

- Download the app from this URL using a Google Play username and password.
- Follow the instructions to create a Sharecare account, or log in with your existing account.
- When prompted, enter the activation code: sharecare2015.

Make calls as you normally do. The app will provide a short description of your mind-set during the call, and a graphic will show your intensity and sources of stress.

* The app is still in development, so this is a beta version and currently available to Android users only and may be titled Sharecare instead of Living in the Green.

job). Here is an example of how this type of guided imagery can cure your aches and pains: Visualize the spot of pain. Follow the nerve from that spot to the center of your mind. Ask your body if you can take control of that pain, and visualize the way that would happen.

5. Progressively relax

FOCUS ON YOUR MUSCLES. BY TENSING and relaxing each muscle, you can help relieve some of your stored physical stress. While sitting or lying down, tense the muscles of your feet as much as you can and then release the tension. Tense and relax different muscle groups of your body one at a time. Focus on your legs, stomach, back, neck, arms, face, and head. When done, relax for a few minutes. ♦

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HOW SWISS CELLULAR THERAPY CAN LEAD TO A VIBRANT LIFE IN 2016 AND BEYOND

It was early 2013 when Dr. Bruce Lowell, a New York internist, first began recommending Celergen to his patients. They came to him seeking relief from a variety of ailments, including chronic pain, depression, and a lack of energy and mental focus. Within weeks almost all of them reported significant improvements.

"The response time was much quicker than I would have imagined, sometimes as little as two weeks," says Dr. Lowell, of the Lowell Health and Longevity Center in Great Neck, New York. "Celergen's most notable attribute is that it benefits different patients in widely different ways. Some of my patients reported improved libido and sexual performance, while some said it helped reduce joint pain and gives them a better night's sleep."

Dr. Lowell was so impressed with the research behind Celergen that he began taking it himself. After just a couple of weeks, he experienced a noticeable increase in energy, so much so that he no longer needed a jolt of caffeine to combat the "four o'clock slump."

"Having seen first hand proof of what Celergen can do, in both myself and my patients, I now know that something remarkable is definitely going on," he says.

CELERGEN HOLDS THE PROMISE FOR A HEALTHY NEW YEAR

It was nearly two years ago that Dr. Alex Alonso, a Miami physician, first learned about Celergen from one of his patients. "My patient told me he had begun taking a supplement that significantly increased his overall vitality and energy level," says Dr. Alonso, "and he was so enthusiastic about Celergen that I decided I needed to investigate it for myself."

As Chief of Radiology at Miami's Jackson South Community Hospital, Dr. Alonso has long been an advocate of preventative medicine. His disenchantment with "volume driven medicine" "Take this pill and we'll see you in a couple of weeks" led him to found Miami's Life Wellness Institute, where he uses cutting edge techniques to improve the overall well being of his patients. One of his most successful treatments is cellular therapy, which has proven to significantly improve quality of life and longevity.

After researching Celergen, he found cellular therapy's potential very intriguing. Celergen is a Swiss formulated treatment that stimulates the human body's natural healing and revitalization powers by rejuvenating individual cells in the human body.

Like Dr. Lowell, Dr. Alonso also took Celergen before recommending it to his patients and urged his wife to do so, too.

"Both of us are 45 and in good physical condition, so I was skeptical as to whether we would see much in the way of results. But something good happened—that's the only way I can describe it," says Dr. Alonso. "In addition to improving the vitality of our skin and hair, there was an overall improvement in our sense of well being. It was hard to put our fingers on it, but something was definitely going on."

WHAT IS CELERGEN?

Celergen is a transformative treatment that stimulates the human body's natural healing power. Celergen Swiss Cell Therapy triggers the repair and rejuvenation of individual cells. One of its key ingredients is a proprietary Cellular Marine Complex. The complex is extracted from the DNA of deep-sea, pollution-free marine life associated with powerful anti-aging properties. Other ingredients include Peptide E Collagen, which reinforces skin elasticity, and Hydro MN Peptide, which repairs and strengthens cartilage. Unlike other cell therapies that involve injections, Celergen comes in an oral soft gel capsule.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Improved energy levels and stamina
- Reduction of wrinkles, scars, and age spots
- Reduced joint pain
- Improved sleep
- Reduced pain from osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis
- Faster recuperation after exercise
- Improved wound healing, skin resilience, tone, texture, and overall complexion
- Improved blood-sugar control
- Enhanced alertness of mind and focus
- Increased sexual performance and satisfaction
- Improved blood circulation
- Strengthened immune system

Shortly after Dr. Alonso began taking Celergen, a professional athlete came to his office complaining of severe knee pain. After conducting an MRI that identified significant cartilage loss, Dr. Alonso recommended that the patient try Celergen for ninety days.

"Three months later, a subsequent MRI found bona fide cartilage growth in the afflicted area. Where the cartilage had once been thinning, there was now a substantial increase in volume. It was remarkable," says Dr. Alonso. "It proved to me that Celergen can play a huge role in a smart approach to health care. It produces verifiable results."

CELERGEN PROVIDES THE TOOLS OUR BODIES NEED TO HEAL THEMSELVES

While Celergen often manifests itself in subtle ways, there is little doubt among physicians that it can produce profound and verifiable results.

That's one of the attributes that Dr. Alonso finds most promising. "Since I am a radiologist I have been able to conduct scans of patients to whom I have recommended Celergen and see physical proof of the results and benefits," he says. "An MRI can evaluate down to the cellular level and proves that the cellular benefits from Celergen are measurable."

In his experience with Celergen, Dr. Alonso has seen it work on a variety of chronic ailments. He has seen meniscus tears that have not only healed, but have also resulted in new cartilage growth and a reversal of degeneration associated with aging. In other patients with high blood pressure, Dr. Alonso has seen instances where they have been able to stop their medications after a few months on Celergen.

"Celergen works according to the specific needs of a patient. It's a smart treatment. It goes to work exactly where it's needed," says Dr. Alonso. "Celergen seems to instinctively know where you have the most inflammation or degeneration in your body whether it's joint pain or cardiac output or a skin condition—and it heads there. Your body has more foot soldiers to help with the healing process. It's like bringing in the cavalry."



"I have been taking Celergen for a year and I love it. Within the first two weeks of starting Celergen, I was amazed at the difference in my skin. It looked so much more youthful that my friends and family were asking what I had done. I have always had difficulty waking up in the morning, but I now easily and energetically get up as soon as my alarm goes off. My energy throughout the day was boosted so much that I no longer need caffeine to sustain me during the day and I no longer have jet lag."

Dr. Rene' Dell'Acqua
Palm Desert, CA



"Within a few weeks of taking Celergen, I noticed an overall increased energy level during my rigorous daily schedule along with less joint and muscle aches. My focus and mental clarity has also improved. In addition, my skin texture and elasticity has improved with my face and neck looking firmer and tighter."

Dr. Thomas Tzikas
Delray Beach, FL





How Suite It Is

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FROM THE METROPOLIS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE COAST, the latest evolution in destination spas is a sanctuary within the traditional oasis of the spa: glamorous private treatment suites that include multiple massage tables, relaxation beds, plunge pools, Jacuzzis, soaking tubs, steam showers, and saunas. Stay for two hours or for a leisurely full day in solitude, as a couple, or with a coterie of friends. Many include dining and cocktail service as well. Nudging the exclusive experience up a notch, a few cutting-edge resorts bring the spa into the guest suite with dedicated wellness rooms (and lifestyle coaches) and all the amenities of a spa within the privacy of your own room, neither lockers nor bathrobe-clad treks across the property necessary. >>

BY CAROLYN MEERS AND JANICE O'LEARY



BORGIO SANTO PIETRO

SIENA, ITALY

IN THE SPRING OF 2015, BORGIO SANTO Pietro, a five-star boutique hotel in Tuscany, debuted its tranquil and opulent new retreat. The exclusive spa contains just two spacious treatment rooms, each marked by antique chandeliers, plush furnishings, cascading fountains, and French doors that swing out to the property's gardens, where guests can

choose to have their treatments. Services include a mix of Eastern techniques and Western therapies. The resort also offers focused wellness weeks throughout the year with private and group yoga instruction, guided meditation classes, and detoxifying cleanses. For guests desiring an even more private experience, the nearly

1,900-square-foot Santo Pietro guest suite (starting at about \$2,100 per night) contains its own massage-and-therapy room on an internal terrace. The decadent bathroom features a soaking tub and marble shower, and stone fireplaces grace the bedroom, the drawing room, and the outdoor balcony.

» borgiosantopietro.com

THE DOLDER GRAND

ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

IF THE REMARKABLE 43,000-square-foot spa at this hilltop resort outside Zurich—with its many pools displaying breathtaking views of alpine meadows and the city below, warm Sunaburo pebble relaxation loungers, and a snow room—seems too enormous, opt for one of its more intimate spa suites with butler service. Walled with mother-of-pearl tiles, the 750- and 915-square-foot

suites each contain two massage beds, a mud bath, a whirlpool, a steam shower, loungers, a fireplace, and a television. The larger also includes a private sauna. Prices range from approximately \$350 to \$450 for two hours, with each additional hour costing about \$150, excluding the cost of treatments. The spa has also expanded its offerings with new medical wellness packages, such as the



Vitality option (about \$4,450), comprised of a personal training session, a Kerstin Florian moor mud ritual, a consultation with a sports nutritionist, and a full cardiovascular checkup including an ultrasound, performance diagnostics, and training advice.

» thedoldergrand.com

MANDARIN ORIENTAL, MILAN

ITALY

AT THE NEW 9,600-SQUARE-FOOT Antonio Citterio–designed subterranean spa at the Mandarin Oriental, Milan, you will find a serene sanctuary. A welcome retreat from the city's bustling cobblestone alleys—which are lined with the chic showrooms of Prada, Fendi, and others—the hotel's private spa suite (starting at about \$160 per hour, plus the price of treatments; about \$80 each

additional half hour) invites guests to soak in a personal whirlpool or relax in their own private steam room equipped with chromotherapy lights. After indulging in locally infused offerings such as the mixed-to-order Home Grown scrub—a rejuvenating blend of orange juice, olive oil, anti-inflammatory oregano, detoxifying thyme, and skin-smoothing rice kernels—guests



can snack on sweet dates, sip on mint tea, or venture out of their private suite to take a dip in the spa's heated lap pool.

» mandarinoriental.com

PHULAY BAY, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE

THAILAND

THE THAI PROVINCE OF KRABI ON THE SHORES OF the Andaman Sea is home to the royal family's summer palace as well as one of the most exquisite treatment suites in a country renown for its spa culture. The Harmony Suite at Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, is a 1,200-square-foot sanctuary that includes Thai massage beds, a changing area, a spacious veranda overlooking a lagoon, a steam shower, and a whirlpool for two. Guests can choose to have their treatments indoors or

outdoors. The suite is the ideal place to indulge in the resort's newest offering: the two-hour Spiritual Shiro-Four Hands Signature Treatment for two (about \$265 per person). The ritual begins with a foot bath and consultation for each person, continues with a 75-minute four-hand massage and Shirodhara oil treatment, and concludes with a 45-minute traditional Thai foot massage. Butlers tend to resort guests' needs, should one require a nibble or a glass of wine while relaxing. » ritzcarlton.com

TOP: GEORGE APOSTOLIDIS



FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, WESTLAKE VILLAGE

CALIFORNIA

THE LUXURY SUITE LOCATED within the magnificent spa at this resort is truly intended as a place to while away the hours with friends or family in utter privacy. A cozy fireplace divides a wide relaxation lounge and television from the massage beds and deep soaking tub. An indoor shower has a door that leads

to a secluded outdoor area. The private patio has a plunge pool and a table for six, where guests can dine on healthy spa cuisine and sip refreshing cocktails. The suite rents for \$400 for a half day and \$600 for a full day, not including treatments, and is available to non-hotel guests as well. Check out the resort's extensive multiday wellness



packages, created in partnership with the on-site California Health & Longevity Institute. » fourseasons.com

LAS VENTANAS AL PARAÍSO, A ROSEWOOD RESORT

LOS CABOS, MEXICO

THIS RESORT OFFERS TWO WELLNESS villas located on the beaches of Cabo San Lucas. The 4,500-square-foot, one-bedroom spaces (\$4,500 to \$5,760 per night) open to the sea from multiple vantage points. Relaxation areas abound indoors and out, with a sunlit garden and

deck perfect for Tai chi and yoga sessions and a reflecting pool for meditation. The villas each include a private wellness room, which is appointed with top-of-the-line fitness equipment. Wellness coaches are available on site for villa guests. Spa treatments, such as the four-hour Essential

Collection (dry brush exfoliation; a chili, chocolate, and peanut scrub; a scalp rub and detoxifying body wrap; a botanical bath; and full-body massage), may also be performed in the suite. Beyond the suite's outdoor pool is easy access to the gorgeous Mexican beaches. » rosewoodhotels.com

TOP: ELIZABETH DANIELS PHOTOGRAPHY; BOTTOM: RIGOBERTO MORENO



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DESIGN CONSULTANT: Susan M. Jamieson, ASID



VILLA MANZU

GUANACASTE, COSTA RICA

ON THE NORTH PACIFIC COAST OF COSTA RICA LIES the tranquil Peninsula Papagayo and the eight-suite Villa Manzu. Inside the private retreat, which accommodates 22 guests and is available for exclusive rental only (\$16,500 per night), is a unique spa treatment room. Massages, scrubs, facials and custom treatments are given in an open-air, ground-level space, which is curtailed on two sides by cascading water from the elevated pool above, creating a fresh and secluded rain forest experience. The suite also has a sauna and steam shower.

There is no additional cost for the spa suite, as it is included in the estate's all-inclusive fee. Treatments are extra and use locally made, organic products. Guests have views of the ocean as well as the rain forest, where three species of monkeys cavort. Private drivers, chefs, and an adventure concierge are at guests' service. Wellness takes many forms here, from the gym, yoga platform, and two pools on the property to the paddleboarding, surfing, kayaking, and snorkeling off the shore of the beach. » villamanzu.com

ROSEWOOD BEIJING

CHINA

THIS HOTEL IS THE BRAND'S ENTRÉE into Asia and with it, Rosewood has introduced a new concept—five well-appointed overnight spa suites that offer a deeper sense of escape. These premier suites (starting at \$1,000 per night) measure nearly 1,000 square feet and feature a plush king-size bed, an outdoor balcony with dazzling views of the city's sculptural CCTV tower,

an in-room massage table or expansive Jacuzzi, and space for manicure and pedicure treatments. Consider scheduling the three-and-a-half-hour Balance treatment: A relaxing steam bath is followed by a mulberry mud mask that draws toxins from the skin, a one-hour massage, and one-hour eye-renewal facial. Guests of these suites also enjoy exclusive access to the Manor



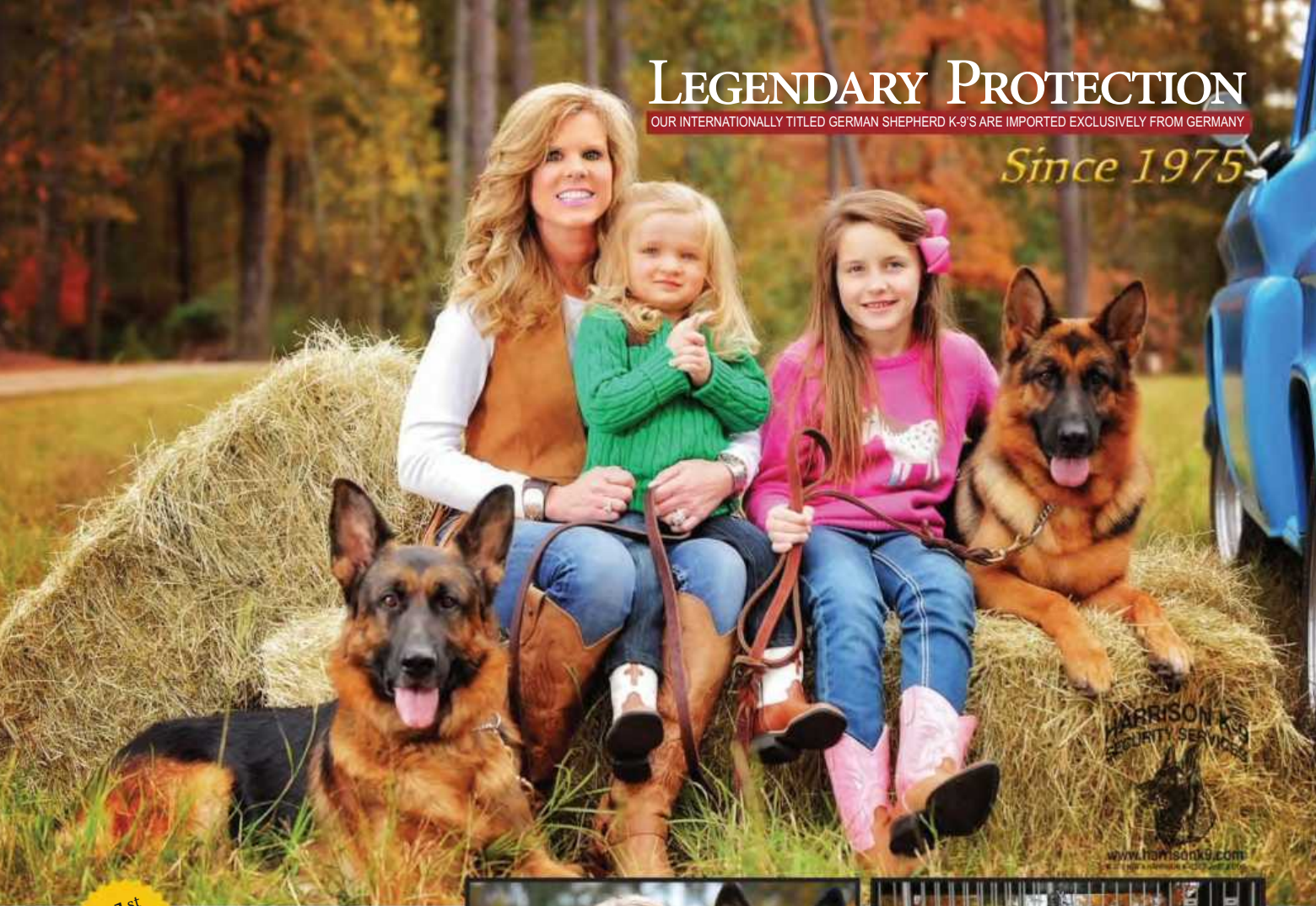
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The Good Sleep

NEW RESEARCH REVEALS WHY SOLID SLUMBER IS CRUCIAL TO WELL-BEING AND BRAIN HEALTH.

BY STACY BAKER MASAND | PHOTOGRAPHS BY HUGH KRETSCHMER

SCIENTISTS HAVE DISCOVERED EVEN MORE REASONS TO PURSUE A GOOD night's sleep. To remain healthy and mentally sharp, remember the names of colleagues and clients, and recall—even decades later—the wondrous details of one's traveling adventures, quality sleep is essential. Charles Czeisler, MD, chief of the division of sleep and circadian disorders at Brigham and Women's Hospital, elucidates the dramatic ways eight hours of slumber can make a difference.

SAVES LIVES

SIXTY-NINE PERCENT OF AMERICANS REPORT GETTING inadequate shut-eye—less than six hours a night—during the work week, says Dr. Czeisler. One in five car accidents can be attributed to drowsy driving, he adds. Each month, 58 million people say they struggle to stay awake while behind the wheel and 8 million lose the fight, leading to 1.2 million crashes annually with 500,000 injuries and 6,400 deaths.

you nod off. Although the brain composes just 2 percent of body mass, it uses 20 percent of the body's energy stores every day. Brain scans of people who have not slept in 24 hours show less ATP in areas of the brain related to judgment, emotion, and performance. This might be why we snap at colleagues or spouses when we have not had enough sleep or have less focus for even simple tasks such as holding conversations or remembering where we put our keys.

RESTORES ENERGY RESERVES

SLEEP IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR PERSONAL VITALITY AND well-being. While you snooze, the body works overtime to restore energy levels for the next morning. Exchanging sleep for work or play shortens the time for rebuilding energy sources like adenosine triphosphate (ATP), a molecule in the brain made up of three high-energy bonds that dwindles throughout the day. As neurons fire with flashes of activity, ATP burns off the bonds until only adenosine remains, which gets replenished when

ENGRAVES MEMORIES

“THINK OF YOUR NIGHTLY SLUMBER LIKE A STORY WITH A beginning, middle, and end,” Dr. Czeisler says. “It’s structured. When you first fall asleep, you enter the non-REM stage, where you eventually fall into a deep sleep and begin consolidating all the memories that occurred in your day. Later you move into rapid-eye movement (REM), the 20 percent of the night when you dream, as well as combine new memories with old ones.” Interrupting one chapter of the story can mean important memories may be forgotten.



REPAIRS BRAIN CELLS

“*Unlike other cells in the body that are discarded when they are no longer useful, brain cells are with us for life.*”

CHARLES
CZEISLER, MD

SLEEP IS ALSO CRITICAL FOR FIXING AND MAINTAINING neurons. Unlike other cells in the body that are discarded when they are no longer useful, “brain cells are with us for life,” says Dr. Czeisler. “Who we are as a person is stored in these cells. All of our life’s memories are stored in their architecture, so we cannot just toss them. Think of it as a complex computer network that needs to go offline to backup or regenerate—the same is true for your brain during sleep,” he says. Some estimates suggest that humans each have 70,000 new thoughts every day and not enough space or energy to store all the new synapses. The brain uses its downtime to “prune away” less important synapses.

DETOXIFIES THE BRAIN

DURING SLUMBER, TOXINS IN THE BRAINS OF ANIMALS drain through the glymphatic system, the latest discovery by scientists in Dr. Czeisler’s research department

AN AID TO COUNTER SHEEP

THOSE LOOKING FOR AN ALTERNATIVE TO AMBIEN or Lunesta, two frequently prescribed sleep aids, now have a third option: The newly FDA approved Belsomra (suvorexant), which is designed to help ease chronic insomnia and may help one fall and stay asleep, says Rachel Salas, MD, the assistant medical director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Sleep. Most sleep aids change the organization of sleep, and many of the most common ones—such as Ambien—reduce the depth of sleep so that one has a lighter sleep, according to Charles Czeisler, MD, chief of the division of sleep and circadian disorders at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. This new generation of sleep aids, however, works differently in the brain.

Drugs like Ambien and Lunesta, known as hypnotics, work on the sleep system, says Dr. Salas. They promote sleepiness by targeting the neurotransmitters that inhibit sleep. “Belsomra, the first of its class, works on the wake, rather than sleep, system,” she says. “If you think of a light switch, sleep is when the lights are off; the switch is down. In those who suffer from insomnia, the switch is always up; they are always awake. Belsomra aims to temper that strong wake response.”

The drug is designed for those who struggle to fall asleep rather than those who wake in the middle of the night, which remains an issue with fewer treatments. Dr. Salas cautions that Belsomra is not intended as a first line treatment for insomnia. In several clinical studies of more than 1,700 patients, participants taking the drug fell asleep an average of 2 to 22 minutes faster and stayed asleep approximately 20 minutes longer than the placebo group and woke without the grogginess experienced with other sleep aids. While this data may sound insignificant to many, she says that for insomniacs, these numbers are meaningful.

Its recommended dose is no more than 20 milligrams, taken within a half hour of bedtime. “It is best when used for the short term in combination with cognitive behavior therapy, which is the gold standard for treatment of insomnia,” Dr. Salas says. “Insomnia never just gets better on its own. Most people need help to make the necessary behavior changes.” —JANICE O’LEARY

R Of Note

From David Arnold,

Senior Vice President/Group Publisher
of *Robb Report*

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“
Making up for lack of sleep during the week by sleeping later on weekends might seem like a good solution, but could do more harm than good.
”

at Harvard Medical School. These newly discovered channels run close beside blood vessels and serve to “take out the trash,” says Dr. Czeisler. Cells shrink during sleep, and the glymphatic canals enlarge to flush the debris that the brain does not need at a rate two to three times faster than during waking states. Dr. Czeisler’s team has just received a grant from the Office of Naval Research to conduct MRI studies of humans using special equipment to measure participants’ brain wave recordings when they sleep in the magnet during an all-night MRI. Scientists will be able to see if the glymphatic channels enlarge in humans to more effectively carry away toxins like amyloid beta during sleep as they do in rodents. It had been thought that the brain does not have the traditional lymphatic system that drains toxins from the rest of the body, but a very recent publication suggests there are some lymphatics in the brain, Dr. Czeisler says. “The toxic by-products produced in the brain—one of them is amyloid-beta protein—occur as a result of firing neurons as you consume energy,” he adds. “It is similar to an automobile, where you create a by-product from using energy. Sludge builds in the oil when pistons fire, which is why you change oil. In a furnace, you clean your flue because it gets clogged. The brain is a pretty green system, but it does produce toxins that can damage cells.” This is likely why people with sleep disorders have increased risk of disease such as Alzheimer’s and experience cognitive impairment 10 years earlier than those who get adequate sleep.

IMPROVES CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

AS MUCH AS THE BRAIN NEEDS SLEEP, IT IS JUST ONE PART of the body rejuvenating during repose. While one may be able to sidestep the short-term effects of lack of sleep, studies show a significant impact on overall health with chronic sleep deprivation. Dr. Czeisler says research shows that those who catch only five or six hours of sleep per night have a 200 to 300 percent greater risk of calcification of coronary arteries in five years. Sleep deficiency may also result in higher blood pressure.

BOOSTS IMMUNITY

NOT ONLY DOES SKIPPING ON SHUT-EYE LOWER INSULIN resistance and increase appetite, but it also creates a weakened immune system and a decreased ability to fend off infections and viruses. Your odds of catching a cold and flu double, he says, when you are exposed when deprived of sleep. When being given a vaccine, patients absorb only half the antibodies if they receive the shots without enough sleep. Over time, people burning the

candle at both ends also increase their risk for developing obesity, diabetes, and a host of other diseases and mental conditions, including depression.

PROMOTES LONGEVITY

SLEEP DEPRIVATION EVEN IMPACTS YOUR MORTALITY. People who have persistent insomnia, which can occur when you shift the timing of sleep onset or waking thus altering circadian rhythms, over a 20-year period have a 65 percent increased risk of premature death.

DESPITE THE GRAVITY OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION, DR. CZEISLER takes a decidedly rosy view of the latest science. “Sleep is one of the easiest behaviors you can do to increase performance and longevity and reduce the risk of disease,” he says. His three keys to healthy sleep include adequate duration, consistent duration, and good quality. That means getting seven to nine hours a night with the same sleep and wake points each night and day, and a lack of persistent insomnia, tossing and turning, sleep apnea, or other disorders. Not all is lost if sleep structure is compressed from the recommended seven to nine hours to, say, five or six hours a night if you keep your sleep and wake times the same every day. “Consistency will help you preserve the amount of deep slow wave and REM sleep, whereas if you abruptly wake up three hours early, you will be missing a large fraction of the sleep structure,” he says.

Making up for lack of sleep during the week by sleeping later on weekends might seem like a good solution, but these so-called “sleep holidays” could do more harm than good. “Displacing sleep on weekends—such as going to bed at 4 am and sleeping until noon—can disrupt circadian rhythms,” says Dr. Czeisler. For instance, waking at 5 am during the week but 8 am on the weekends feels like a several-hour time zone shift to the body. When Monday arrives and with it an early alarm ring, that is another adjustment the body has to make. And because the body naturally acclimates to the later sleeping-in time, a Monday 5 am wake up will seem like the middle of the night. Over time, this “recurring circadian disruption is akin to traveling to different time zones without leaving the house.” Even without a hectic travel schedule, this so-called “social jet lag” bequeaths all the adverse effects of regular jet lag, Dr. Czeisler explains, including a higher risk of obesity, insulin resistance, metabolic diseases, immune system disorders, and poor memory consolidation. In the short term, disrupting the circadian system impairs performance the next day. Instead of sleep holidays, he recommends naps or nodding off a little earlier one night in the week. ♦

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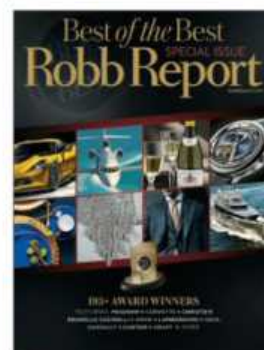
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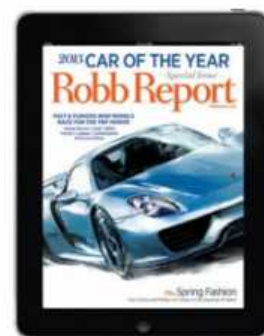
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Jonathan Beckett

A CONVERSATION WITH THE YACHT BROKER
AND WORLD TRAVELER.

SINCE TAKING THE helm of Burgess in 1992, Jonathan Beckett has grown the London-based yacht brokerage from a three-person outfit to an industry leader with a dozen offices around the globe. Traveling the world has been a passion of Beckett's since he was a teenager, and he credits years of living abroad for his appreciation of the finer things in his life. "I was paid \$100 a month, and yet I lived better than most," he recalls of a year spent working in Cairo. "It was a very sobering and humbling experience, where the friendship and generosity of my Egyptian friends—who were worse off than me—was extraordinary." Robb Report connected with the 58-year-old CEO at Burgess's Monaco office before he embarked on an 11-day journey to seven cities in six countries on three continents. —SHAUN TOLSON

Tell us about your early travels.

I decided I was going to take a gap year before going to Durham University to play rugby, so in 1975 I jumped on a plane and flew to Antigua in the Caribbean. I did some day work on a few boats for about a week and then

got a job as a deckhand on a 55-foot sailing yacht. I ended up sailing all around the Caribbean—from Florida to Venezuela—for nine months. That opened my eyes to the world. I also traveled with friends around the United States by Greyhound bus. We couldn't afford to stay in hotels, so we had a tent or we would sleep on the bus. I'm pleased to have had those experiences, because they're very grounding. They gave me an understanding of what it is to have to live frugally. I came from humble, modest beginnings, and now I often stay in quite nice hotels. But I also enjoy simple, basic living.

These days, much of your travel is done on jets. When was the last time you took an extended journey by yacht?

I sailed across the Atlantic on a 100-meter motor yacht about five years ago. It took us about three weeks from start to finish. You don't get anywhere fast, and that's one of the nice things about boating—nothing happens quickly. You actually have time. You can enjoy the scenery. Everything moves at a different pace.

Are there any new yachting destinations on the rise?

People would say Asia is emerging, but it's only going to emerge so far. There will never be another Mediterranean. The Mediterranean is where 80 percent of the action is.

What about the Mediterranean makes it an ideal yachting destination?

It's the variety. You've got a bunch of different countries; you have various islands; and you have good food, good wine, good spas, entertainment, and shopping. You can be in the South of France one day, a deserted beach in Corsica the next, and in Monaco for dinner and a show that evening. The variety in the Mediterranean—the differences in food and culture—is amazing, and that's what people want.

Where are you excited to travel in 2016?

Moscow, because it's a different place today; the market is changing. Mexico City—we've got some new clients there, which is exciting for us. And New York City, which is probably my all-time favorite place to go and do business. There are really no other yachting companies based in New York City, so we're a bit of a novelty.

Any personal trips planned this year?

My family and I go to the Caribbean once a year. At the end of January we're staying in a private villa called Elsewhere at Canouan Resort in the Grenadines. It has fabulous beaches, and it's quiet. It's a great place to go for family time. **R**

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